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THE CONSTRUCTION OF PRIMARY TEACHING AS WOMEN'S WORK IN PORTUGAL (1870-1933)

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PART II

Part II of this research concentrates on the Republic and the period of transition to the conservative 'Estado Novo, from 1910-1933.

Firstly, it will outline the main events and conditions in which social and educative forces and movements struggled throughout the period. Secondly, it will unravel the contradictory nature of educational policies during the Republic, focusing in particular on the role of the State in the development of mass schooling and the recruitment of women teachers. Thirdly, it will examine the changing educational policies following the advent of the Military Dictatorship and relate this to the changing position of women in Portuguese society. Fourthly, different perspectives on women's role in society as well as co-education will be reviewed. Finally, it listens to the voices of women teachers who began their teaching career during the last years of the Republic or in the first years of the Military Dictatorship.

Chapter 5

The Socio-Political Context and the Position of Women in the Republican and Dictatorial Years (1910-1926/1926-1933)

Introduction

During much of the authoritarian regime in Portugal (1926-1974), the First Republic (1910-1926) was a period of special reference for the Left, representing the struggle for a lived democracy. Justice and equality were perceived as central aims of the struggle in this period. Concerning education, the republican years were seen as years of 'progressive ideas', 'freedom', concern for children's 'integral education' (meaning pupils' self-government and the articulation of theoretical and practical school activities, cf. Candeias 1981, 1992) and for 'educating the people' in the most far-reaching localities and places in the interior of Portugal. Thus the republican era was invested with fervent and intense beliefs appropriated by the Left as part of its struggle within the authoritarian regime. Republican reality, however, was more complex and contradictory than the ideas of the Left may have led us to believe. Studies which have been published have indeed revealed the attempts by the Republic to implement new social conditions and policies guided by the ideals of 'Freedom, Equality and Fraternity'. At the same time they have revealed that the State was in the midst of strong conflicting demands and appeared unable to direct its activity in order to gain hegemony over the political process in a sustained way.

The tumultuous change in the republican years, as well as the continuities and ruptures characterising the transition to the authoritarian regime, need to be described and explained, focusing specific events which occured in both the Republic and the Military Ditactorship in order to understand the educational policies developed within them. Hence, a review of some studies from different perspectives and theoretical concerns follows, in the hope that the basic and pivotal changes occurring within both political regimes might be evoked within this research. Women's situation in education and in work will be examined as well as the contradictory expansion of their social and political rights.

The Republican Years

The picture that emerges from the studies published about the republican years (Medeiros 1978; Telo 1980; Schwartzman 1989; Marques 1991, Catroga 1991, among others) is quite complex. These studies will be used in this chapter in a selective way, contributing to shed light on the radical character of many of the republican policies as well as on the conflicts which emerged among the various social and political sectors. The ambiguitites and contradictions of republican policies became clearly visible to all since, on the one hand, there were quite distinct and open pressures by different groups put upon the State and, on the other, republican politicians aimed openly to destroy the alliance between the aristocracy and the Catholic Church whilst preserving the colonial empire and developing a capitalist economy (see Catroga 1977).

Marques (1991) divides the republican regime into three periods. The first, 1910-1917, was described by Afonso Costa, a leading republican leader, as the 'strong Republic'. It was the period when many of the more radical policies were implemented, under "an aggressive and uncompromising political orientation both at the internal and international levels" (1991:670). The second period was comprised of the years 1917-1919, when right wing forces were in power and Portugal was also, like other countries, living under the adverse conditions brought about by the First World War. The third period of the Republic was post-1919 - Costa described it as the 'weak Republic'. He was referring to the constant compromises, hesitations and incoherence which characterised State policies in these years. During this period, republican orientations and codes were increasingly abandoned (Marques 1991:670).

The 'strong Republic' directed its policies at various power networks which until then had retained power. The Catholic Church, perceived by the first Republicans as a source of conservatism and old privileges, was subjected to the strongest attack. The most important measures taken were as follows: the Society of Jesus was expelled and many other religious orders were closed; religious teaching in schools was forbidden; some bishops were displaced; priests were forbidden to wear their vestements in public. Most important of all, the Law of Separation between State and the Church was passed and in 1913 diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Portugal were severed. As António J. Telo (1980) stresses:

> (...) the Law of Separation between the Church and State issued a challenge to the Church since the religious orders were expelled, Church property and other goods confiscated, priests

> transformed into a kind of civil servant and many Acts of the Church, from then onwards, needing the consent from the State. Various catholic centres were attacked and destroyed by the Republican jacobins (such as the Oporto Catholic Association and the magazine "A Palavra") and some monasteries were invaded. (...) The Pope intervened and launched a papal bull "Jandudum in Lusitania" which condemned eepublican politics (Telo 1980:81).

In fact, the republicans tended to see the priests as the great allies of the nobility, strongly sustained by the semi-feudal relations which characterised rural Portugal at the time. The Portuguese Church was proprietor of vast estates and had strongly opposed Liberalism since the nineteenth-century. According to Telo (1980), Portuguese liberalism was specially "jacobin and anti-catholic" (1980:77) in a weak industrialised country where rural populations had great significance and were under the firm influence of the Catholic Church.

Other measures were taken at the social and political levels: the abolition of nobility rights and titles; the divorce law and the protection of children resulting from marriage; a new electoral law, giving more electoral weight to the towns; the right to strike and to lock out were regulated; reforms at all levels of the education system were implemented.

Nevertheless, although this first period was marked by strong State intervention which produced considerable legislation on various matters, different authors sense a lack of coherent political orientation during this period. For example, the historian Oliveira Marques (1991) stresses:

> Although all these [political] measures represented a great advancement to the progress and modernisation of the country, it was clear that the Republic lacked a coherent plan of reforms, in accordance with its prior promises and aims. It can be said that only in the domains of anticlerical struggle and in the reforms of education was it possible to catch a glimpse of a consistent, and sometimes revolutionary, policy (Marques 1991:703).

Oliveira Marques (1991) tends to assign the difficulties that the Republic experienced during these years to its advanced character in the context of a Europe which was predominantly conservative and monarchist (with Switzerland and France as the only exceptions). "The Republic was an unusual regime in Europe, vanguardist in the denial of a traditional order, and, in many cases, subversive" (Marques 1991:700). The international pressure and, even the "friendly advice" given by the European powers to the republican governments to frame and dilute the anarchist and other revolutionary forces which existed in Portugal at the time certainly had an impact on the construction of domestic policies. 'Law and order' was a major concern of many governments and, as a result, revolutionary struggles were cut short and, increasingly, the Republic lost its popular support. Further, the participation of Portugal in World War I did not give stability to the republican regime. In an international context, where Germany demonstrated clearly its ambition to own the Portuguese colonies in Africa coupled with an aggressive and disdainful campaign against Portugal in foreign newspapers, the republican government of Afonso Costa saw in Portuguese participation a possible means of keeping the Portuguese colonies. However the participation of Portugal in the war was a blow to the regime since, besides other factors, it had to confront strong opposition, even within the republican ranks.

With regard to the last period of the Republic (1919-1926) - the 'weak Republic' - it is worth noticing that, after the end of World War I and the assassination of the dictator Sidónio

Pais[1], a new alliance of the Lisbon petty-bourgeoisie and the proletariat was able to fight and defeat monarchist revolts that had emerged in the South of the country and spread to the North ('North Monarchy' & Monsanto[2]).

The post-war situation was quite difficult, at least in financial terms: the Portuguese external debt was 22 million pounds and inflation reached levels previously unknown (if we take 100 for the cost of living index in 1910, it reached 316 in 1919 and 551 in 1920, see Telo 1980:18). However, there was an optimistic climate in business, commerce and industry where "all hoped to get rich quickly after the war with the maintenance of the English funds" (Telo 1980:15). In particular, the industrialists felt confident since the republican regime always defended their interests in a variety of forms. At least until 1921.

The workers' movement was also gaining ground. The republican regime owed its own renewal to the intervention of unions and workers, in 1919, against the monarchist movements. The workers' movement demanded and obtained higher wages. Also, it carried out two important ambitions in 1919: the formation of the CGT (General Confederation of Workers) and the first publication of its daily newspaper *A Batalha*[3]. Due to the strength of its organisation, and the international context, where workers'

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[1] Sidónio Pais was President of the Republic when he was murdered in 1918. His dictatorship was short-lived (1917-1918), but he was "very close to becoming a charismatic leader with a genuine gift for demagogy and the manipulation of the masses, much more so than his successors after 1926" (Martins 1968:309).

[2] From January 1919, a monarchist revolt was sucessful in the North of Portugal for several months. In the South, the republican military forces allied to the 'people' were able to defeat monarchists in Monsanto. Between 19 January and 13 February 1919 the North and the South were divided in two different political regimes. After some battles, the monarchists were defeated and the republican regime established throughout the whole country.

[3] *A Batalha* ('The Battle') was the newspaper of the anarchist Trade Union Confederation (CGT). In 1920-21 it had a circulation of 20.000. It had the second or third largest circulation of any daily newspaper (Candeias 1981:40).

movements were making visible gains and the success of the Russian Revolution, programmes of all parties included chapters on the 'social question'. In fact, political measures concerning social security and the amelioration of working conditions, such as the reduction of the working week by eight hours and compulsory work insurance, were aproved by the government in 1919, before the general elections (Telo 1980:150). However, after the elections, and during part of 1919 and 1920, workers' struggles and strikes took place, confronting employers' tactics, which included the lock-out and a refusal to reduce the working week by eight hours. Although the government initially aimed to avoid direct confrontation with the workers' movement, some months later, the police and other forces were brought in to repress their struggles. There were imprisonments, assaults on unions, deportations and some workers were killed in fights with the police.

According to some authors and, in particular with the crisis of 1921, it became clear that conservative forces began to organise themselves in support of a future authoritarian regime (Medeiros 1978; Telo 1980). Also in 1921 there were signs of radicalisation of a fraction of the Republican Party, initiating some State policies with a socialist flavour.

. explanations for the collapse of the Republic

Various interpretations of the collapse of the Republic are offered by several authors. Some are summarised here in terms of the contributions and clarifications they provide.

António J. Telo (1980) clearly emphasises the formation and increasing visibility post 1921, of two political blocs, one radical and the other conservative. Both struggled to achieve power and implement their respective policies. Social and political forces established their positions with either bloc from then until 1925. In 1925, it was already clear that the conservative bloc was winning. It consisted of the army, Catholic Church and important sectors of industrialists, amongst others. The army, on a whole, was not a republican institution. Although some sectors such as the sergeants ('sargentos') had given firm support to the regime, in particular, after the end of World War I, the republican regime was unable to reorganise the army in accordance with the requirements of a democracy. Its command was close to the monarchy and it recruited peasants from the remote parts of the interior of the country as soldiers. The Catholic Church started to organise itself, developing a specific orientation towards the 'moral regeneration' and 'rechristianisation' of Portugal (ibidem:83). Its influence was felt mainly among the provincial petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry and the urban bourgeoisie. Sectors of industrialists were also beginning to influence politically the course of events within the Republic. Confronted with radical republican governments that were in power in the final years of the regime, the large economic groups started to organise with different aims. Up till then, they concentrated on fighting the workers' movement. From then onwards, they prepared themselves to confront the radical republicans:

> It was necessary that industry made its views clearly known to the State and it opposed the possibility of the State being in the hands of the radical bloc (Telo 1980:35).

From 1925 onwards, the only uncertainty was knowing which political forces would hegemonise this conservative bloc :

> Thus, the 28th of May is more important for the form it took and the power relations which it established than for its direct result: the end of the regime that had started in 1910 (ibidem:6).

In his study *A Sociedade e a Economia Portuguesas nas Origens do Salazarismo* (Portuguese Society and Economy in the Origins of Salazarism, 1978), Fernando Medeiros relates the changing and conflictual situation during the Republic to the deep capitalist crisis which started with the great depression of 1887-1890, "whose effects were still felt thirty years later" (1978:6). The liberal regime was incapable of sustaining economic expansion according to modern capitalist requirements: the dominant classes, although attracted by capitalist profits, were still connected by their own insecurity and suspicion to the more stable forms of the 'Ancient Regime'. It is this kind of logic and attitudes that Medeiros describes as 'social paternalism' ('social-paternalismo', 1978:9). Portugal was still, largely, a peasant and mercantile social formation. It is in the light of the peculiarities of social groups located in the post-war conjuncture that Medeiros examines the specificity of the crisis which then characterised the Portuguese social formation. His study involves quite a complex analysis of the social and economic structures of the Portuguese social formation as well as an analysis of the workers' movement and its activities, at a time when the economic, political and social crisis broadened in the country. Medeiros is also successful in demonstrating that the workers' movement, in spite of a period of gains and expansion, began, in particular after

1923, to lack coherence and power, due to internal changes, divisions and also to partial and increasing defeats. Therefore, the conservative offensive in 1925-1926 did not encounter workers' and union opposition to its advancement.

Both Telo's and Medeiros's studies concentrate on the contradictory character of internal policies and social movements which led to the formation of opposite political blocs struggling to win power. The world relations in which the Portuguese Republic was situated are scarcely mentioned. It is true that Medeiros pays attention to the contradictions in the relations between Portugal and its colonies at the time, stressing that what was deemed by most republican sectors as all important in the 1920s - the definition and updating of the economy - was put in jeopardy by the Republic's close attachment, as a dependent colonialist State, to the Empire. "To dispose of men for immigration and for colonialisation was incompatible with their proletarianisation in Portugal" (Medeiros 1978:342). As a consequence, the industrialisation project was weakened (see Stoer & Araújo 1987:128). However, Medeiros does not extend his analysis to include both the relations of Portugal to its colonies and its relations to core countries.

It is precisely a world perspective, combined with an analysis of the national policies of the time, to which I will turn now.

Kathleen Schwartzman in *The Social Origins of Democratic Collapse - the First Portuguese Republic in the Global Economy* aims, like Medeiros, to bring together 'two analytical threads': conjunctural and structural. As she stresses:

> This book is concerned with explaining the collapse of the Portuguese democratic regime; but it is equally concerned with those social conditions that place structural hindrances in the way of democratic stability (Schwartzman 1989:XIII).

It is quite a complex task to question the specificity of Portuguese capitalism in its relation to the 'democratic collapse' and link it to the context of world relations. A crucial and basic question is posed from the start:

> (...) are all forms of state equally likely to appear in the world's core, periphery and semiperiphery or are those countries called semiperipheral more hospitable to some forms of state and less so to others? (Schwartzman 1989:XIV).

The 'democratic instability' of the First Portuguese Republic is examined by Schwartzman (Schwartzman 1981,1987,1989) in terms of instability at the level of the State (several polls and a high turnover of cabinets; the deterioration of the judicial system) and at the level of political representation (proliferation of political parties and emergence of parallel power networks such as the private militia). However, she questions explanations of this instability by historians of the First Republic (e.g. Douglas Wheeler and Oliveira Marques) as being due to political factors such as conflicts between personalities and political leaders:

> There is no doubt that instability existed and that it contributed to the fall of the Republic. What seems less clear is the causal role that rampant political instability plays in an explanatory model of democratic collapse (1989:5).

In her perspective, the explanation lies elsewhere and the question of political instability is part of the problem and not a response to the fall of the republican regime. Political instability does not lead necessarily either to democratic collapse or to authoritarian regimes.

Schwartzman wants to privilege, in her analysis of the democratic collapse, the position of Portugal in the world-system while giving emphasis also to national factors (such as the internal social structure of Portugal and the disarticulation of its several economies) in order to avoid the functionalist framework of world-system theories. It is the neglect within these theories of the internal social, economic and political contradictions that she intends to address.

From Wallerstein's contributions, in particular from *The Capitalist World Economy* (1979), Schwartzman underlines the "space of bargaining power" that some countries, specially some semiperipheral ones, might gain from the crisis in the world-system:

> Wallerstein argues that a crisis in the world-system - that is, a long-term disequilibrium between supply and demand that has consequences for the market - provides space for a shift in the bargaining power of various countries, principally for a "few" semiperipheral ones. This possibility derives from the fact that periodic crises force states to release their hold on semiperipheral ones. Thus in a worldwide crisis, some intermediate elements in the surplus extraction chain gain at the expense of those at the core of the system. Countries with distinctive internal politics and social and economic structures are best able to take advantage of this crisis. It can only be a few, however, because the worldwide crisis also means that the semiperiphery is cut off from its normal sources of income, capital and technology transfer. It is in semiperipheral countries, with their more or less "even mix" of core and peripheral countries, that efforts to transform the state payoff in terms of economic advantage (Schwartzman 1989:17).

The specific policies that these countries need to implement to make gains are not always compatible with a parliamentary democracy, due to a lack of flexibility for the changes to be implemented. "In these situations the likelihood of an exceptional State in the semiperiphery increases" (ibidem:18).

> Perhaps the collapse of a juridical form of state (formal democracy) was the political recognition of the untenability of the socioeconomic pact. In other words, the instability and collapse of the parliamentary regime resulted from an inability to consolidate at the socioeconomic level what had been formally constituted at the political level (namely, the democratic state)(ibidem:49).

Wallerstein's functionalist assumptions about the State are analysed: the authoritarian regime and the exceptional State emerge, caused by the needs of industrialisation and of the industrial bourgeoisie in semiperipheral economies. Instead of the focus on economic 'needs', Schwartzman emphasises the "structural constraints that the semiperipheral position poses for democratic stability" (ibidem:21). These are not necessarily translated into a political form such as an authoritarian regime. In this way the aim is

> (...) [not] to sever the ties between economic and political processes; rather it attempts to lessen the reliance on a functionalist or instrumental connection between the two (ibidem:21).

Her analysis develops a view of the Portuguese social formation as a 'disarticulated semiperipheral economy'. This is explained in her view by the semiperipheral status of Portugal:

> It was at one and the same time, dependent upon Britain, in a quasi-colonial fashion and dominant over an empire that included nine colonies (ibidem:77).

Schwartzman describes the dependence of Portugal upon England[4]. The relationship between both countries started in the fourteenth-century and was continued through several treaties,

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[4] Portugal's dependency is also examined in another study by Miranda (1991). In this study, Great Britain is seen as having contributed to obstructing the development of a Portuguese industrial bourgeoisie as well as the institutionalisation of governments "coherently concerned in the promotion of the industry" (ibidem:16).

pacts, etc, which bound both countries militarily, politically and economically:

> That this 'mutual binding' had always been asymmetrical is no surprise. In 1910, Portuguese/British dependency was visible in the nature of the trade relationship between the two countries, in British involvement in the external debt, in British capital penetration of Portuguese companies, and even in British penetration of the colonies. (...) In practice, the British (...) always saw the convenience of having Portugal develop its agricultural production, to which Britain would give a priviliged position in its markets but for which it also expected protection for its own textile products. Portugal was to be a British orchard (1989:79-80).

It is the Portuguese situation in the world-system that produces, at the internal level of the country, a diversity of economies, of forms of capital accumulation which are not necessarily integrated, and a 'divided capitalist class'. Schwartzman is able to identify four economies within the Portuguese social formation: the agro-export project, export-led industries, industry for the domestic market and the 'domestic production of agriculture for domestic consumption'[5]. Each of the first three had its markets, profit rates, wage bills and circuits and all of the four were independent from each other. "Portugal was not just an ensemble of economic sectors, fundamental fissures existed within its social organisation" (ibidem:98). And later Schwartzman clarifies: "In a disarticulated economy, economic interests act as a centrifugal force, propelling groups

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[5] The agro-export economy consisted of farming for the international market and was the largest of the four economies. It was a separate economy because "the capital stock was endogeneous" and its labour force consisted mainly of peasant families, not producing for the national market. The export-led industries (the most important was the textile) produced mainly for the international market. They required heavy capital investment and employed a semiproletarianised force. In the third economy, the industry for the domestic market, "the inputs were domestic, the products were destined for the domestic market, and the labour force was more proletarianised" (Schwartzman 1989:89). The fourth economy was "residual" and consisted mainly of small production of peasant families producing for their own survival.

as far away from each other as possible" (ibidem:125). Given the disarticulation of economies, it was difficult to construct a hegemonic project. There were many incidences of conflicting interests, which influenced State's institutions, causing democratic instability. In the republican context, political conflicts were mainly the "political manifestation of underlying economic conflicts" (ibidem:134) and therefore the explanations which privilege 'conflicts between political leaders' as the reason for the collapse of democracy, in her view, need to be related to the structural constraints from which they originated.

At the same time that she acknowledges structural constraints are 'insufficient conditions' to explain democratic instability and the collapse of democracy, she also addresses the conjunctural conditions which Portugal encountered in the 1920s:

> In the 1920s, (...) the disarticulated economy organised within the rules of the democratic State encountered insurmountable historical circumstances (...). Without the structural constraints, the conjunctural crisis of the 1920s might have had minimal impact on the political system. But this was not the case for Portugal (ibidem:149-151).

"An extreme economic crisis" in the postwar period is the conjunctural condition that Schwartzman wants to privilege at this point. The various governments confronted "the more pressing question of Portugal's economic solvency", which meant that they attempted:

> (...) to install a hegemonic project, broaden its mandate to resolve the economic crisis, mobilise the consent of the dominant interests (the horizontal dimension) and do so within the democratic State with the consent of the dominated (the vertical dimension) (ibidem:154).

Schwartzman's analysis is of interest because of the importance she confers to the semiperipheral situation of

Portugal and to the impact of particular conjunctures within the broader world context. This emphasis is quite uncommon in studies about the republican period. The relevance of her work renders it necessary to debate some of her more problematic statements.

One of her most challenging statements with regard to the present thesis is that the Portuguese State lacked autonomy as it was transformed into an instrument in the hands of the various economic forces which were able to pressure government. Each aimed to implement its own program and each represented a different project for Portugal:

> (...) a state occupied by various economic interest groups that attempted to translate their projects into legislation. The occupation of the state apparatus by economic-interest groups is conceptualised in various ways - most common, however, is the notion that the state lacked autonomy. If a state lacks autonomy, it will never be in a position to supply collective goods (ibidem:174).

Schwartzman concentrates her analysis upon the State, focusing primarily on its relationships with the various social groups. As a result the instrumentality of the State is more visible. The State is perceived as accomplishing without resistance the various and often contradicting political projects. The impossibility of this task seems to escape Schwartzman's notice. Additionally, Dale's critique of Miliband's analysis of the capitalist State appears relevant: "The State is still conceived as a neutral instrument with the nature of policies it follows decided by the desires of those who control it" (Dale 1989:26). The histories of the various State institutions and the actual differences among them or the views and interests of State officials or even the bureaucratic organisational model of the

State are not taken into account. Thus, it seems quite straightforward to claim that the State lacked autonomy, although from which forces or relations remains unclear. From Schwartzman's later analysis of the 'Estado Novo' of Salazar, probably she meant social forces such as "political parties and class unions" and "economic groups". Once again she appears to assume the instrumentality of the State since political conflicts within the State are either necessarily related to class conflict or do not seem to attract her attention.

In contrast with this perspective of the State's activitity, the approach adopted in this thesis privileges the notion of 'core' problems which confront the capitalist (and patriarchal) State. The different pressures and conflicting problems confronting the State acquire a specificity given its semiperipheral situation. The great diversity of the 'four economies', to which Schwartzman refers, is of interest because it helps us to understand why and how State activity was blocked in this period. The "greater heterogeneity of Portugal's structural places", in Sousa Santos' words (1985b; 1990a) produces what he terms a "deficit of hegemony" of the State and contributes to the blockage of its activity.

The Years of the Military Dictatorship

> In 1926, on the backs of the military rather than through any mass movement, what Villaverde Cabral has called the 'Salvation of the Country Ideology' rushed in to fill the vacuum that had been created by general disillusionment with the political functioning of the Republic and to plug the gap left by the defeat of (or abandonment of the stage by) the working class. Cabral (1976) locates the defeat of the working class generally in the successes of National Socialism and Italian Fascism and in the effects of the international economic crisis. Hermínio Martins, on the other hand, refers more specifically to the neutral attitude of the Portuguese working class organisations, such as the trade unions and working class political parties, to the military coup of 1926. (Stoer & Araújo 1987:132).

As already mentioned, the political preparations for a conservative takeover had been underway for some years, probably since the crisis of 1921. However, when the coup started to develop, it became clear that there was not just one centre of command and that the power struggle was to continue for some years. In actual fact, the military coup did not result in any coherent political programme (Silveira 1982). Apparently, a common concern was proclaimed in terms of the 'moralisation of public life' and, especially, of the State institutions, and the dismissal of the 'political' civil servants in the State apparatus. One of the military leaders (Gomes da Costa) declared soon after the military coup, that the aim of the movement was "to push the army to intervene in politics to moralise our public administration (...) [for which] the immediate dissolution of Parliament, which has exerted a ruinous action upon our political habits, [is a prior condition]"[6]. 'Moralisation' seems to have been used by those promoting the revolt as a justification for the suspension of civil and political rights.

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[6] Quoted in Silveira 1982:362.

Some authors have already analysed the political and social events that preceded the military coup as well as the struggles which followed the military movement (see Madureira, 1978, for a detailed analysis of these events). Campinos (1975) has studied the period of the Military Dictatorship. He points out the uncertainty and the lack of clarification on the part of the *putchists* in regard to what the new regime was to achieve:

> (...) some wanted to create a 'new order of things', anti-liberal and anti-democratic; others aimed at most to ameliorate the old liberal republican institutions (Campinos 1975:34).

Campinos underlines that the period 1926-33 was not the uninterrupted process of construction of the 'Estado Novo' without political fluctuations and contradictory measures which is sometimes assumed. Several revolts and uprisings, both civil and military, took place (among them the republican revolt of February 1927, leaving many dead and several hundred wounded, another in 1928 and the revolt in Madeira in 1931 were the most important). Braga da Cruz has also analysed the conflicts between monarchists and republicans and between catholics and laymen, thus providing a perspective which recognises this period as conflictual and very much unstable (Cruz 1986; see also Martins 1968 on the divisions within the far-right movement, *integralismo lusitano*).[7]

The State was itself in transition. With the first phase of what has been termed the 'pure' Military Dictatorship of 1926-28

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[7] Various studies have recently been produced on the dictatorship, in particular on the institutionalisation of the 'Estado Novo'. Among them, Silva *et al.* 1989; Martins 1990; Cruz 1980, 1988; Rosas 1985, 1986, 1988; Oliveira 1987. Also, it is worth citing the studies *O Fascismo em Portugal* (1980) and *O Estado Novo: das origens ao fim da autarcia, 1926-1959* (1987), where the papers presented to two congresses on these topics are assembled.

(Martins 1968), political purges, administrative sanctions, imprisonment and deportation of opposition leaders followed, causing the extinction of those political parties which had not been outlawed. Censorship was introduced soon after the military coup. After the uprising of February 1927, the sectors of the Army and other police forces involved in this coup were dissolved. There were also visible changes in the education field, which will be analysed in chapter 6, and it was clear that the State was to play a more central role in the ideological construction of educational policies.

The year 1930 marks the clarification of the political regime resulting from the military coup, for it was in this year that the question of the 'nature of the regime' (Cruz 1986) - which had generated strong tensions between the conservative republican faction and the radical monarchist sectors - was clarified. As Martins underlines, it was in this year that Salazar gave two key speeches where the "authoritarian corporate order" was the central focus (Martins 1968:310). "We have a doctrine of our own and we are a force", said Salazar at that time (quoted in Martins 1968:315). The *União Nacional*, the political organisation where the pro-dictatorship forces were assembled (which was to become the 'fascist' party[8]), was founded in 1930.

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[8] A. Costa Pinto provides an excelent summary of the debates within the Social Sciences on the interpretations of the 'Estado Novo' and more generally on the question of the inclusion/exclusion of Portuguese dictatorship in the category of fascist States. He is able to identify generally, in the various studies published on this question, the "rejection of the inclusion of the 'Estado Novo' in the family of European fascisms, due to the lack of elements considered as crucial to characterise this historical phenomenon" (Costa Pinto in Silva *et al.* 1989:187). These elements which distinguish the Portuguese dictatorship from the fascist regimes were: the lack of a charismatic leadership, of a single political party able to mobilise the masses, of an expansionist and warrior ideology, of a totalitarian tendency (Pinto in Silva *et al.* 1989:158). These debates are presented also in the above cited study *O Estado Novo: das origens ao fim da autarcia, 1926-1959* (1987).

If there was resistance to the Military Dictatorship - several revolts have been mentioned above - there was also support at both internal and external levels for the new regime. As far as support from foreign countries is concerned, it is worth highlighting here the clear British support for the authoritarian regime, already demonstrated by Rosas (1988). He has analysed the correspondence between British ambassadors in Lisbon and the Foreign Office in this period. The republican leaders in opposition to the Military Dictatorship were classified by the British diplomats as 'demagogues', 'extremists', 'old politicians anxious to reestablish corruption and disorder' (Rosas 1988:18). A racist evaluation of the Portuguese was also included in these reports:

> (...) the question is to know whether the decline of Portugal is an inevitable consequence of its racial inferiority, due partly to the considerable intermixing (in its population) of black blood, and partly to its suffocating climate - the nation is physically and mentally degenerated (...) irremediably emotional, volatile and incapable of consistent effort or logical reasoning (ibidem).

It is also clear, from their analysis, that British diplomats had no doubts about the Portuguese regime's allignment with the Italian fascist regime. The support of the British government was even stronger when, in 1931, with the revolt of Madeira and the Azores, the British embassador guaranteed military assistance from British vessels. British troops were disembarked in Madeira to end the republican revolt against the Military Dictatorship. Further the Foreign Office authorised the selling of arms to the Portuguese regime which was said to be under threat (see also Nunes 1987 on British diplomatic correspondence).

The period 1930-1933 revealed clearer definition of both political measures and the creation of new institutions. Indeed, it was during this period that institutions such as the *Secretariado para a Propaganda Nacional* (the Bureau for the National Propaganda) was born. In 1932, the leadership of the political party *União Nacional* was nominated. In the same year new decrees on the organisation of the police and the repression of political crimes were also published. In 1933, the *Estatuto do Trabalho Nacional* (*Statute of National Labour*) was promulgated upon the model of the *Carta del Lavoro* of Mussolini. Free unions were outlawed and all labour organisations had to follow the 'corporatist' model. State employees were forbidden from participating in any sort of association. Also, in 1933, the new Constitution, creating the 'Estado Novo', was approved. The political police (the P.V.D.E., later PIDE) made its first appearance in the same year.

Another institution which contributed to the construction of the 'Estado Novo' was the *Acção Escolar Vanguarda* (A.E.V., the National School Vanguard), a 'national-syndicalist' youth organisation which, from 1932 (when it was created), marked out political life with marches, banquets, and served as a 'militia' for Salazar in the great mass rallies. It was a paramilitary organisation, attempting to follow the German and Italian models of the time. Salazar maintained a quite ambiguous relationship with regard to it. Apparently, this can be related to the fraction of the fascist movement that A.E.V. represented and which Salazar wanted to control and incorporate into the main political movement (see Pinto & Ribeiro 1982, for an analysis of the ambiguous relationship of Salazar to the A.E.V.).

As a result, the 'Estado Novo', from its birth, assured its own 'stability'. New institutions were created, others were transformed, still others were put under strict conservative control. As Nunes emphasises (1987:194), they seemed to constitute a reply to several 'political disorders' (strikes, left opposition demonstrations, the "recrudescence of communist activities" and the confrontation with the 'national-syndicalists' in a Northern urban region). The construction of the 'Estado Novo' appears as a successful attempt (from the perspective of the forces which gave their support to it) of domination as well as of 'hegemony'. Fernando Rosas stresses that, in this process, the 'Estado Novo' obtained a "triple social equilibrium" and a "high degree of autonomy and authority with regard to the social groups supporting it" (1986:122). The State was able to arbitrate the contradictory interests of the dominant social sectors as well as those of small and large agriculture and industry. The third element of "equilibrium" concerned the working class movement. The main aim of the coalition which supported the 'Estado Novo' was to restrain the union movement:

> The 'Estado Novo' supressed free unions with the legislation of September 1933, repressed the workers' struggles, imprisoned and deported their leaders, but equally attempted to contain these struggles through policies of framing the working classes in accordance with the needs of the accumulation process (...). It adopted subsidies of unemployment and a minimum salary for certain activities, it contained the prices of basic food products, it created the foundations of social security and pressed the large employers (in exchange for a high percentage of their profits) to adopt a policy of social paternalism, visible in many of the main factories with their refectories, playgroups, medical posts, lodgings, private social security, etc. (ibidem).

Hence, it was via both clear repression and various attempts to gain the consent of the working class and other social

groups that the State gained its forms and contours as the 'Estado Novo'. In another contribution, in his essay on the 'longevity' of the 'Estado Novo' (1989), Fernando Rosas stresses that probably "the capacity for constructing and reconstructing the basic consensus crucial to the regime" contributed to its durability (Rosas 1989:23). In the perspective of Rosas, there were also other political processes (the 'politically and economically timid nature of the Portuguese bourgeoisie', the 'historically demonstrated incapacity' of the political opposition to constitute an alternative to the regime' and state repression which silenced, intimidated and got rid of political opponents) that played an important role in the durability of the 'Estado Novo'.

At the same time, Rosas calls attention to structural factors such as the semiperipheral situation of Portugal. I want to give particular stress particularly to this situation which was also analysed by Schwartzman (1989) with regard to the republican years. The situation of Portugal as a dependent country, with small-scale industry and a large sector of the population living in a traditional rural economy, partially explains how Portugal was able to pass through the 1929 world crisis with some ease. While Portugal was a dependent country, it was also a colonial power. Its colonies were important for the maintenance of the regime. Commodities and capital were channelled into the colonies while many of the primary goods came from Africa to Portugal, helping to overcome the effects of the world crisis. "The colonies played a strategic role, simultaneously one of accumulation and growth of Portuguese capitalism, and as a factor of reduction and contention of the effects of this same growth" (Rosas 1989:18).

To sum up, this review of a complex social and political period - the period between 1910 and 1933 - aims to contextualise broadly the changes in educational policies to be analysed in the next two chapters. At this stage, I would like to emphasise two main points of this review. Firstly, the review traces some of the interpretations of the 'democratic instability' characterising the republican years. At the same time, it stresses that political instability remained during the Military Dictatorship, mainly in the early years, until the authoritarian State was able to hegemonise the political process within the Portuguese social formation. Secondly, it aims, through the perspective of Kathleen Schwartzman, to underline the semiperipheral situation of Portugal in the European context throwing light upon the specificity of Portuguese political events. Her contribution is compared, even if briefly, with Sousa Santos' theory (1991), stresssing the heterogeneity of the Portuguese social formation as its structural propensity. In the historical conditions of the First Portuguese Republic, this heterogeneity contributed to blocking the activity of the State. Some of the structural factors identified during the republican years were recalled in the analysis of the Military Dictatorship (1926-1933). In particular, the semiperipheral situation of Portugal was given some attention, via the contribution of Fernando Rosas (1986,1988,1989), as this situation is seen as central to understanding the specificity of the Portuguese social formation, and the educational changes implemented when the State was both repressing and attempting to construct a hegemony, in particular in the last years of the Military Dictatorship.

The next stage in this chapter is to present a brief review of women's situation in Portugal during both periods. This may be important in order to better understand the complexity of the issues involved in the process of construction of primary teaching as *women's work* , particularly from the perspective which I have adopted in this thesis.

Women's Situation in the Republic and Military Dictatorship

Portuguese women's situation was affected by a society undergoing a slow process of industrialisation and the great influence of a conservative Catholic Church supported by a large peasantry and rural bourgeoisie. In this society, the republicans when they came to power naturally expected the State to play a hegemonic role in modernising society.

Some years before 1910, Ana Osório stressed that "among the million Portuguese who can read and write, only one third are women" (Osório 1905:152), at a time when the whole population consisted of not much more than five million people. Undoubtedly, the problem of the instruction and education of women was one of the most frequently discussed concerning women's situation in Portuguese society. Generally, there was a basic consensus, among the various sectors in republican society - probably more extended than at the end of the previous century (see chapter 4) - on the need to educate women. In 1926, girls' rolls represented approximately 40% of the total number of enrolments in primary school (see chapter 6). There is no data available for those girls who were formally educated in their homes. In the same year, only 24% of girls attended the lyceum sector although their attendance

had improved since the beginning of the Republic in which it represented 11% (cf. Valente 1973). In technical education (first level), girls' rolls percentage was 17% (cf Carvalho 1986) in 1926, representing as well an improvement from the 11% in 1910. Only in 'higher primary schools', were there more girls than boys (in 1924-25, 55% of girls). In universitites, women were becoming less invisible, although they represented a small minority (Gomes 1987, Araújo 1992, Rocha 1991, Santos, C. 1991).

As far as women's work is concerned, according to one of the most militant woman campaigning for their rights, Ana C. Osório (1918), the majority of women did not work outside the home. Apart from the women who worked in factories or domestic service, those who did " non-manual" work, were concentrated in a limited number of jobs, such as typists, shop assistants and clerks. Some were telephone operators which, according to a women's magazine, was a suitable occupation for women. The woman operator was "kind, (...) exerting her activity without public recognition of how hard she work[ed]"[9]. Women were also admitted to the State sector as civil servants and a newspaper commented, perhaps ironically, that " it is a relief to see that the State is eventually concerned with Portuguese women" (*A Sátira,* 1911, quoted by Godinho *et al.* 1983:32). Besides these occupations, it was mainly teaching which attracted many women. Most probably, women were also emerging, in other non-manual occupations. For example, around 1910, there were ten women doctors (6 in Lisbon, 3 in Oporto and 1 in Vila Real, quoted in Godinho *et al.* 1983:.27).

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[9] *Vida Feminina,* 1925, I (7).

Ana Osório traced the following picture of women's work situation in 1918:

> We see few women doctors, university professors, lawyers. There is no woman agronomist or veterinary surgeon or engineer practising these professions, necessary to replace men [due to the war]. As far as civil servants are concerned, all of them work in the lowest positions in the job hierarchy. Thus, none can demonstrate the superiority of her mind and the discipline to orientate it, however much her intellectual merit may be. In trade, women cannot overcome the situation of servitude to which they are subjected and they are paid less than their colleagues. As a factory worker, it is hardly necessary to stress her state of 'instruction'. She is the one who receives the lowest salary, not because of lack of intelligence or ability, but due to the lack of 'instruction' and understanding of her own individual rights, as a reflexive human being with an autonomous life and responsibilities (Osório 1918:137-8).

Osório stressed that the work situation of Portuguese women was worse than in other countries where women were already in many non-manual jobs. Foreigners, visiting Portugal, she argued, were disagreeably surprised not only by the reduced number of women in such occupations but also with the heavy manual labour women used to do, particularly in the North of the country. She mentioned male resistance to opening up non-manual areas of work to women for fear of competition. In her view, the atmosphere of "moral asphyxia" of Portuguese life (1918:19), inherited from the Mauresque tradition, and the prejudices from convent education contributed to the situation of women "as if they were incarcerated in a prison from which they can only escape by scaling the walls" (ibidem:111). Emphasising the dependent situation of women in the country, she claimed, in a rather hyperbolical way, that:

> There is no country in the world where women' are in fact less respected as self-conscious and autonomous human beings than ours (Osório 1918:19).

Osório was struggling with patriarchal relations in the country and was greatly dissatified with women's work situation. However, a more precise view would possibly recognise that the republican and feminist discourses on the relevance of 'instruction' and education for all, as well as emphasising other social and political rights, probably encouraged more women to work outside the home. The more militant sectors, among the feminist organisations and women's freemasonry, struggled to construct a female identity on the basis of access to 'instruction' and education in order to develop women's full capacities and allow women's entry into the 'workplace' to acquire their own economic autonomy. At least in the case of women teachers, these discourses attracted some of them to teaching. In the absence of detailed studies on women's work situation and its evolution, during the Republic, it is not possible to present data here which could confirm whether or not other work areas were experiencing an increase in women's numbers.

Moreover, the First World War also brought some changes to women's situation in Portuguese society. Some writers of the time pointed to this process (see, for instance, Osório 1918; Cunha 1921; Gouveia 1924). This awareness became more acute as the years passed. As will be seen in chapter 8, some of the male conservative writers, after 1926, were stressing the effects of the War in making women work outside the home and the consequent changing morality.

It is interesting, at this stage, to consider the contribution of Mary Nash (1991) on the effects of World War I on women's situation in the world of work, in some European countries including Spain (which was a non-belligerent country).

She questions assumptions by social theorists and historians (such as Marc Ferro) that the war signaled the disintegration of the traditional family, and that the ideal of domesticity and women's role restricted to the home came to a crisis "due to the massive incorporation of women during the war years" (Nash 1991:127). In the countries involved in the war, women worked in the labour market, but, Nash stresses, the sexual division of labour was only questioned during the period of the war. Afterwards, the discourse of domesticity and the traditional role of women as mothers and wives was re-emphasised by a pro-birth social policy, both contributing to bringing women back to the home. In non-belligerent countries, such as Spain, due to the war, there was an increasing demand for products, in particular textiles. Women were not incorporated into a formal labour market but were involved in the production of these items in their own homes, where they could provide other services necessary for the survival of the family in wartime. Following Michèle Perrot, Nash stresses that the emergence of women in the public sphere at that time, coupled with feminism, awakened male hostility against women's work outside the house - "a renewed anti-feminism, expressed in a crisis of masculinity, and for that situation, the war represented a heroic way out" (Nash 1991:128).

In the Portuguese case, the effects of the war had probably more similarities with the Spanish case, despite Portugal being a belligerent country. This was due to the fact that Portuguese involvement in the war was smaller when compared with the main powers (according to Osório 60.0000 Portuguese men participated in the War, see Osório 1918:103), and consequently the lack of a male workforce was less serious. As a

result, women were not needed to substitute for men, in the various occupations, to such an extent. Probably, the analysis carried out by Mary Nash on the Spanish women's work situation may be applied to the situation in Portugal.

The position of women regarding other social rights, besides education and work, underwent some changes during the Republic. Some of the most restrictive measures, concerning family life and the position of women within it, were abolished with the 1910, 1911 and 1918 republican laws. Women could from then on, be tutors in legal matters and belong to the 'family council' (to decide on children's matters due to death or disappearance of parents). They were also able to publish their own work without the husband's permission and were no longer compelled to swear obedience to them. A wife was also able to request the suspension of her husband's power over their children, when he was seen as putting them in moral danger. She could not be compelled to return to the home by her husband if she left it on her own decision. It was also possible to ask for the investigation of illegitimate paternity, which was an innovative measure, non-existent in other countries at the time (Cabete 1923:39). Maternity leave of two months was granted to working women in 1921 in the last stage of their pregnancy, regardless of whether they were married or not[10].

Moreover, the law of divorce was introduced, against the wish of the Catholic Church and conservative sectors. For the first time, men and women could claim a divorce on the same grounds.

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10 *Decree* nº 7704, 7 Sept 1921 granted this to women teachers, and some months later this right was extended to women school employees, when António Sérgio (discussed in the next chapter) was Secretary of State for 'Instruction'.

The feminist movement before the Republic had defended divorce as a logical consequence of marriage when seen as a contract. Throughout the republicans years, divorce was seen as the great achievement of the movement. As Fernando Catroga underlines, with the approval of the divorce law, the feminist movement "obtained recognition of the same juridical status as men and, on this basis, demanded the withdrawal of other legal measures against women's dignity" (Catroga 1986:143; see also Osório 1911; Guimarães 1969, 1986, 1988). According to some authors, however, divorce never became widely adopted (Marques 1991:654; Cascão 1986). According to Cascão (1986), the number of divorces in the republican period was clearly reduced when compared with other European countries. Between 1920-1930, compared to the Portuguese case, the number of divorces in Austria was seven times higher, in Germany and France, five times higher; in Belgium and Holland, treble the number, and a little more than double in England. Cascão was also able to detect fluctuations in the divorce rate. For instance, the periods between 1919-1923 and 1929-1940 were periods of clear increase in the number of divorces. As might be expected, divorce was adopted mainly in towns. Civil servants, the commercial bourgeoisie and industrialists were the social groups who more often divorced (Cascão 1986:161).

However, men's power over married women concerning other matters, in particular the economic, was maintained. Married women were compelled to adopt their husband's residence and to follow him whenever he went (except to the colonies and foreign countries). Husbands were responsible for administering wives' and children' assets and property. This occurred although the Civil Code stressed that "the conjugal society is based on freedom and

equality [between husband and wife]". Moreover, a discriminatory sexual division of labour was re-legitimated by this law which stated that: "it is the duty of the husband, in particular, to defend the being and the assets of his wife and children; it is the duty of the wife to assure domestic and social services in order to fortify and perfect family unity" (art.º39)[11]. In contrast, a single woman, i.e a non-married woman, over 21, had almost the same rights as a man, except the right to vote. She was able to own assets and govern her salary. She could get a job without having to ask permission (see Osório 1911).

Reflecting upon the tensions and contradictions that the republican laws had on the family and the position of women within it lead us to conclude that "male supremacy remained untouched" (Catroga 1986:144). To claim freedom and equality for both partners in marriage, while maintaining male power over all economic issues is deeply contradictory and probably more rhetorical than realistic in preventing discrimination against women. Oliveira Marques also stresses this point: "Despite republican legislation representing progress in women's rights, the husband continued to be the uncontested head of the family and to retain power and rights which secured his position" (Marques 1991:654). However, a more precise view needs to stress that, since the context of changing patriarchal relations was a conflictual terrain, the introduction of some measures on women's rights signalled some gains and contributed to changing women's situation.

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[11] The Civil Code was produced in 1867 by the Liberal Regime. The Republic did not produce a new civil code, only changed some of its regulations.

Political rights were seen as crucial to republicanism and feminism at the time. However, republicans behaved in a contradictory way regarding women's franchise. Patriarchal relations and ideologies and political strategy to preserve power in republican hands partially explain such behaviour. In chapter 8, the question of how both republicanism and feminism assessed the importance of political rights will be examined. At this stage, it may be stressed that women were clearly denied the right to vote by the republican regime. The question of women's political rights was obviously a very sensitive area within the regime. Before the 5th October 1910, some of the "republican centres" introduced the claim for women's franchise into their political programmes (such as the 1873 political programme of the Lisbon Republican Centre). The Republican Party's programme of 1891 supported universal enfranchisement, although it was ambiguous concerning women's right to vote, stressing that it should be granted on the condition of women being educated and of the degree of "civil obligations for which they were responsible". The 1909 Republican Congress, which met at Setúbal, agreed also that women should have the right to vote, as soon as the Republic was declared (Fazenda Jr 1912:20). With the actual emergence of the Republic, the Senate approved women's right to vote, more than once (for example, both in 1912 and 1916), on the basis of their education (having a university or lyceum certificate). However the Chamber of Deputies resisted this right, voting against it. In 1918, another project for women's franchise, on the same terms as male voters, was presented to the Chanber of Deputies. Once gain it was

rejected.[12] In fact, only in 1931 were women, duly certified, able to vote.

The actions deployed by Carolina B. Ângelo, a leading feminist, with the support of the Republican League of Portuguese Women, are already part of the history of women's struggle for the vote. The republican electoral law of 1911 declared that all citizens, over 21, who were literate, or paid taxes as heads of household, were potential voters. Carolina Ângelo was a doctor, and a head of household, due to the recent death of her husband. After the publication of this law, she asked for her name to be added to the electoral register. This was refused by the Minister of Home Affairs[13]. She appealed to the courts and won. She was able to vote later that year. Her victory[14], however, was of brief duration: a new electoral law published in 1913 restricted the vote to literate male voters (see Olim & Marques 1979; Catroga 1991; Esteves 1992).

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12 In 1911, the electoral law stated that to have the right to vote, it was necessary to be over 21 years old, pay taxes to the State and know how to read and write. In 1918, the new electoral law stated that all men over 21 and who were 'literate' were able to vote (see Catroga 1991; Esteves 1992). António Telo (1980) stresses that, in the 1920s, with such an electoral law, only 700.000 approximately, out of 6 million Portuguese, were granted the right to vote. This means that "only 11% of the population could theoretically participate in the elections" (Telo 1980:117). However, the actual number of voters was less. In 1915, only 5% of the population voted. Telo adds: "It was possible for the government to obtain 100.000 votes from the party machinery, offering employment in exchange for votes. This explains the apparent paradox that the government was always capable of winning the elections. (...) Regrettably, it must be confessed that the most liberal and avant-garde regime which existed in Portugal until recent times, was based on the trade of employment for votes ('empregomania') and political manipulation ('golpismo'), (...) to deny this, is to deny evidence itself" (ibidem:118).

13 At the time, the Minister of Home Affairs was António José de Almeida, an important republican leader, later President of the Republic. He was one of the republican leaders who gave support to the constitution of the Republican League of Portuguese Women (see Esteves 1992).

14 One might argue that the victory of Carolina B. Ângelo was too 'personalised' to be significant. In the end, only one woman was able to vote. Further, the judge who decided the matter, was the father of Ana C. Osório, another leading feminist.

In other countries, in particular in the anglo-saxon world, women were winning the right to vote - 1892 in New Zealand, 1899 in Australia, 1906 in Finland, 1907 in Norway, 1919 in Germany, 1920 in USA, 1928 in the UK.[15] In Catholic countries, during the 1920s, women continued to be denied the right to vote in general elections as well as the right to be elegible. An explanation for this difference is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, probably, the role of the Catholic Church in these matters as well as its perspectives on women played an important part.

After the military coup of 28th May 1926, in Portugal women's legal rights were not immediately affected. Many writers left their testimonies of the increasing number of women gaining access to lyceum and universities, and consequently, of the growing number of qualified women (see Vale 1934; Cunha 1934; Ferreira 1935). In a recent work, Rocha (1991) demonstrates that the 1930s saw a real expansion of girls' rolls in the lyceum, a situation previously unknown. In the same period, in the universities, women made up a quarter of the student population. The annual average rate of growth was of 8.17, while for university male students, it was only 3.14. The increase of women students in universities was particularly visible in a limited number of courses, where they were in fact the majority: Pharmacy

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[15] This data was collected from Catroga (1991) and from the feminist magazine *A Mulher Portuguesa*, 1912, I (1), p.8. It is worth noticing that some of the victories regarding women's right to vote were gained before 1892, but they were concerned with the right to vote and not to be elected, such as in 1869, in the state of Wyoming (USA). In other USA states women won the political vote (without elegibility) - Colorado, 1893, Idaho & Utah, 1896. Between 1892 and 1928, in many other countries than those just mentioned, women also won the right to vote but this was restricted either to a 'political vote' (without elegibility) as in New South Wales (Australia), 1902, Tasmania, 1904, Queensland (Australia), 1905, Victoria (Austr.), 1908, or to participation in local elections (Iceland, and France, 1906; Holland, 1910).

(70.7%) and Arts (57.6%). In the 1920s, in both courses, their numbers were lower (respectively 38.1% and 44.6%). Further, almost in every other university course, women students were increasing in number, presenting higher annual average rates of growth than their male peers (cf. Araújo 1992). Apparently, women were also increasing in numbers in some occupations, but continued to meet fierce male resistance to their work outside the domestic sphere (Ferreira 1935; Lamy 1935).

Legal regulations changed but in a more complex way than anticipated. In 1931[16], in a context that needs further clarification that cannot be discussed here, qualified women over 21 (either with a university degree or heads of household) were able to vote, a right for which women's organisations, as we saw above, had struggled during republican times. This may have been a measure that the Military Dictatorship implemented to gain legitimacy within specific sectors of Portuguese society since even an authoritarian regime depends upon the consent of certain social groups. As already underlined, this is the argument of Fernando Rosas regarding politics in the 'Estado Novo'. In the same way, the State as Military Dictatorship took on its temporary forms and contours in its attempt to construct some consensus around specific issues. Franchise, even in its restricted form, may have represented, at the time, a strategy to capture certain liberal sectors as well as allowing the regime to appear less isolated on the international stage (where several countries had already granted the vote to women[17]).

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16 *Decree* 19.694, *Diário do Governo*, 5/3/1931, art.5º, quoted in Sousa 1986:428.

17 Maria Reynolds Sousa (1986) enumerates the countries where women had already the vote by 1930: Finland, Norway, Iceland, USSR, Great Britain, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Latvia, Estonia, Lituania, Luxemburg, Ireland, Spain,

In 1934, three women were invited to enter the 'Corporative Chamber', when the first 'elections' occurred within the 'Estado Novo'. They were probably chosen for the support they gave to the regime and, as Maria R. Sousa remarks (1986), for their support of the women's main activities as mothers, wives and housekeepers. Nevertheless, all three were single women, with a university diploma, and were quite well known to the general public. In this sense, one may also suggest that they were also chosen on the basis of their "merit" (ibidem).

Legal regulations regarding women changed mainly with the 1933 Constitution where the family was identified as a crucially important institution to which women were to be subordinate. Their access to citizenship was stated clearly as dependent "upon their nature and the well-being of the family" (quoted in Guimarães 1985:567).

Grece and Turkey, as well as United States (the majority of its States), Australia, New Zealand and Brazil (Sousa 1986:429).

Chapter 6

'A Fair Balance of Sexes in Primary Teaching' in Republican Educational Policies (1910-1926)?

Introduction

In this chapter, one of the concerns is to unravel the contradictory nature of education policies clarifying the tensions between different *mandates* for education. This may throw some light on the specific policies of mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching which are central to this thesis. In such an unstable period, the analysis of these processes may gain new meaning, when compared with the earlier period presented in part I: in addition to the main problems of accumulation, legitimation and social control that confronted both processes in the period 1870-1910, political problems confronting mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching (i.e. the context of accumulation referred to in chapter 1) were probably more significant.

This chapter will demonstrate how educational policies changed (at least, at the level of political discourse) in relation to mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching. Therefore, some pertinent questions need to be addressed. Did the State take a firm stand on the definition and concretisation of mass schooling? Did the State promote the recruitment of women teachers into the profession? Is it possible to detect, in this period, a direct relationship between the development of mass schooling and the

These and other questions are dealt with in this chapter, bearing in mind the changing political and social context of the republican years. I will be referring to the changes in the 'strong Republic' and in the 'weak Republic', using Afonso Costa's terminology mentioned in chapter 5, as an attempt to clarify the broad changes and emphasis in educational policy-making. This analysis aims to clarify the 'nature' of the State, especially the 'core' problems confronting the semiperipheral State in order to explain (at least partially) the uneven development of mass schooling in Portugal. As far as the 'feminisation' of teaching is concerned, the patriarchal State appears to have attempted to restrict the areas of work to which women had access.

Eventually, the uneven character of the construction of mass schooling in this period will be assessed with regard to the rapid growth of women in primary teaching: it seems that the 'feminisation' of teaching was less dependent upon the construction of mass schooling than in the earlier period. Most presumably, primary teaching had already gained a reputation as *women's work* among specific fractions of women who valued an autonomous life or who needed to earn their own living (or supported other members of their families). Also, the fact that the Republican State attempted, in specific ways, to reduce, or at least, to limit this growth of 'feminisation' demonstrates the importance of the relationship between the construction of mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching since it offers an interesting perspective on the State and its problems of legitimation in this period.

The State and Education - from the Emphasis on the Value of Education in itself in the 'Strong Republic' to *Vocationalism* in the 'Weak Republic'

'Democratic instability', as characterised by Schwartzman (1989) probably affected education in many ways. Educational projects were certainly postponed due, in part, to the uncertainties and ambiguities occurring throughout this period. Several educators, at the time, pointed to the lack of a clear orientation and coherence throughout the republican years (Barros 1920; Santos 1913). This perspective is shared by some authors who have studied this period and who have stressed that the Republic did not implement many of its governmental plans and projects. Nóvoa, for instance, states:

> (...) [on the one hand], the Republic did not keep its promises regarding education, showing its complete inablity to improve a situation considered chaotic even by its own leaders. On the other hand, they were not able to create new forms of education for childhood and youth (Nóvoa 1987:550).

Further, as Medeiros argues (1978), besides a lack of democratic functioning of the State, there was a low budget to cover education as well as other State sectors such as health, housing and transport:

> The radical State continued to exercise sovereign rights in the purest feudal style, without political power making the slightest effort to guarantee the smallest redistributive effect, except for favours conceded to clientalised civil functionaries and the military. Old-age pensions, schooling, hospital insurance, health and public hygiene (...), communications and transports systems, housing and urban care, electrification and water supply, vocational education (insistently called for by both the working class and industrial employers), scientific investigation, pure and applied, and all that normally makes up claims for legitimacy by states over civil societies were ignored (Medeiros 1978:346).

The State, while attempting to respond to different pressures - such as those coming from the workers' movement for less hard conditions of living, for more educational opportunities and for the right of political expression, and those coming from factory and landowners, for 'law and order' as well as others from political and non-conventional groups, such as women's groups - did confront problems which were inherently contradictory. Moreover, as seen in the previous chapter, in the republican period, these problems were exacerbated by the State's obvious inability to guarantee an adequate context for capitalist accumulation, i.e. to secure social order, while attempting to confront a continuing crisis in accumulation. The republican regime attempted to gain legitimacy through its proclaimed interest in the role of 'instruction' and education for social change and modernisation[1]. However the contradictory pressures experienced by the State, and the lack of efficacy in carrying out republican education policies, contributed to the rather early mistrust and discouragement among the social groups who supported the Republic most - the urban low middle classes and the working classes (Catroga 1991).

The fact that the State faced conflicting demands regarding education can be seen in the various *mandates* that attempted to redirect the education system throughout the republican years. It is possible to find echoes of each of them in

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[1] The creation of Lisbon and Oporto universities should be stressed when assessing the success or inefficacy of the Republican State with regard to formal education. As will be seen in this chapter, republican governments with regard to mass schooling were not able to fully concretise the policies they announced for this sector. At least, the new universities aimed to counterbalance the power of the 'old ' Coimbra university, which was, at the time of the Republican Revolution of 5th October 1910, an institution where practices from the Ancient Regime still prevailed (cf. Gomes 1990).

the writings of educators as well as in successive education policies.

From the first period of the Republic to its final years there is a definite change in the *mandate* for the education system. The *mandate* most clearly expressed during the first period was an expectation that the Republican State should be able to extend education and provide 'instruction' to the great masses of the people, to liberate Portuguese society from the 'conservative and malign' influence of the Catholic Church (Barros 1915; Santos 1913). Freed from this influence, State education was to contribute to the full development of the abilities of each child (Lima 1914; 1916). Many educational policy documents emphasised the central role of education in the construction of a new order as envisaged by the Republic. In the introduction to the first *Education Act*, after 1910, it was stressed that:

> The value of a man (*sic*) is seen mainly in the education he gets because it is education that can develop human abilities to their maximum (...) Primary school is the laboratory appropriate for the working classes and it is there that the soul of the republican fatherland will be formed (...) The *abcs* are nowadays the logical base of character and the person who teaches and evangelises is the supreme guide of the people[2].

The much quoted words of a republican minister are also of interest to remember here:

> The Republic intends to sacrifice itself for 'instruction'. It intends however not to spend more than the budget allows. It will end the year rigorously without deficit, making cuts when necessary, without taking into consideration the social costs of such measures; there will be no unforeseen credits. If there is no money, so be it! But 'instruction' will be, after the immediate satisfaction of all liberal principles, the most

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[2] *Decree* 29 Março 1911.

important crusade of the Republic in order to expand 'instruction' in waves[3].

Speeches from politicians, educators and militants on the value of 'instruction' and education expressed demands for equality or, at least aimed to question a former social order based on a rigid monarchist hierarchy where the Catholic Church enjoyed particular influence (Catroga 1991). Republicans, anarchists and the labour movement made these claims openly (see Mónica 1978; 1980; Candeias 1981; 1989). Women's groups claims for wider intervention in family life and more opportunities for women in education and employment, through political groups and the masonry (see Costa w/d; also Silva 1983), were also part of larger movements exerting these pressures.

Within this first period, there were also concerns for a firm moral education that, for some sectors within the republican ranks, meant an education based on the contributions of science and secular precepts; the defence of the "prestige of the republican regime" and "enthusiasm for the heroic facts that illustrate our traditions" (Barros 1914:14,39). Moreover, it implied support for the continuation of colonialist policies in the Portuguese colonies at the time. 'Civic education' was, throughout the period, an area of debate and polemical intervention. António Sérgio - a philosopher and Minister of 'Instruction' during two months, who wrote widely on the need of the 'regeneration' of Portuguese society through social, economic and juridical reforms, paying central attention to education (Sérgio 1913; 1917; 1918) - offered a different meaning for civic education,

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[3] Words of the then Minister of Justice, Afonso Costa, in an interview to the newspaper *Porto*, cit. in *A Federação Escolar*, 2nd phase, year II (92), 15 Oct 1910. Cf. also Costa 1976:301-302 and 408-409.

constructed around the anglo-saxon notion of self-government (associated with the New Education movement in England and USA, see Jenkins 1991) and the school initiatives of Wilson Gill in the United States (Sérgio 1915). However, his views on 'civic education' were not adopted in official educational policies (except in the *1923 Education Reform Act*, which was not implemented because the government fell).

From 1919 onwards, there was a clear change in the *mandate* for the education system. The dominant *mandate* from then onwards was the emphasis on the relationship between education and work which was seen as encapsulating the true contribution towards the industrialisation and modernisation of the country (Carqueja 1918; Sérgio 1923). The solution to the crisis confronting Portuguese society was identified by various sectors via a functional link between education and the world of work providing children and youth with the skills and abilities needed for a changing economy.

Therefore, although political rhetoric about the value of education was heard throughout the republican period, in its first period this value of education was perceived more in developmental and philosophical terms, whereas in the 'weak Republic', education was seen as contributing towards economic expansion, in terms of the skills and knowledge perceived as necessary for the modernisation of the country. I have argued elsewhere, with Stephen Stoer (Stoer & Araújo 1987) that republican educational ideology expressed by the metaphor of the 'child as a growing plant' (Zachariah 1985) was exhausted and increasingly emptied, during this period of the Republic. It was increasingly replaced by an ideological discourse expressed

through the metaphor of the child as a piece of 'clay' to be moulded (Zachariah 1985). In fact, there seems to have been a consensus among many educators and politicians of the last phase of the Republic that a more solid relationship between education and work was vital to the continuing development and industrialisation of Portugal. I will concentrate my analysis on this last *mandate*.

This concern with the economic contribution of education to the development of Portuguese society was echoed by (among others) two leading educators and theorists: António Sérgio, whom I have already mentioned, and Adolfo Lima, who was a lecturer in Pedagogy at the Lisbon Teacher College and wrote widely on education while maintaining a relationship of solidarity with the anarchist labour movement. Sérgio often claimed that the main concern of the school should be "a lição das cousas" (the 'lesson of things') that is, "the analysis of phenomena so that the scientific organisation of experience is concretised in the mind" (Sérgio 1918:29). Education aimed at:

> (...) developing the human side in each mind, at emancipating individuals, at serving social progress, at training intelligence to be more responsive and flexible to the needs of modern democracies; it also aims to familiarise youth with reality, preparing the student to be a modern producer, with clear judgement and quick action (Sérgio 1918:9).

Lima lent his support to what he called 'integral education' (Lima 1914; 1916), meaning "the set of processes which take into account and develop all children's activities, abilities and needs (...) and access to all the knowledge which constitutes the general framework of human knowledge" (Lima 1914: 133-4). Additionally he emphasised that:

> Education in Portugal should be oriented according to the criterion of methodical socialisation of individuals (...) and in order to achieve this aim, should be organised technically, attributing a clearly vocational character to schooling as a whole, at all its different levels (Lima 1916:53).

Although both authors shared a common concern with the contribution of education towards the democratisation and development of Portugal, as well as the need to relate 'theory' and 'practice' in education, they had different conceptions of Portuguese society and its evolution. They represented two different projects of modernisation for Portugal. Adolfo Lima expected that, through the "common school" for all, social class divisions would be mitigated and would contribute as well to changes in Portuguese society based on the primacy of individual and colective freedom (see Candeias 1992). António Sérgio gave his support to the existence of two different kinds of schools (after 12 years of age): one vocational and the other leading to the university. He also believed that, besides the crucial importance that education could have in the reconstruction of Portuguese society, a special role would be granted to a cultivated elite to guide and lead the nation (see Fernandes 1983).

In the proposal for the *1923 Education Reform Act*[4], one finds again the same emphasis on the relationship between education and work. Sérgio had an important influence in that Reform providing a "fundamental orientation: the recognition of the absolute necessity of the creation of what he called the

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[4] This Reform became known as the 'Camoesas' Reform from the name of the Minister of 'Instruction' João Camoesas. It emerged in the period after World War I when Taylorism was introduced into Portugal. Correia (1991) stresses that Taylorism owed its diffusion to an intellectual elite deeply involved in education, such as António Sérgio, Faria de Vasconcelos and João Camoesas.

'school of work' (...)" (Fernandes 1983:620). From the Preamble of the Reform one can read that:

> If we consider the relationship of schools to the social environment where they function, with the aims they proclaim and the occupations for which they train, we realise that schools constitute isolated systems; on the one hand, schools do not have direct relations with the social and professional life and activitites for which they train, as a result of the nature of their syllabus and methods of teaching; on the other hand, the social interests and categories which, outside the schools, control the outcomes of schooling are not represented inside them[5].

According to Correia (1991), the 'Camoesas' Reform expressed concerns for making schooling responsive to the needs of the world of work. It gave special attention to 'vocational' education (ensino técnico) where notions of the 'scientific organisation of work' should be taught to pupils and future manual workers. This would be pursued within an educational system where a clear distinction between execution and conception would operate with regard to forms of training and education (Correia 1991:68-74). The Reform was never discussed by the Chamber of Deputies because, in the meantime, the government had fallen.

It is worth stressing that vocational education policies may have found support among teachers, at least judging from some testimonies appearing in journals and newspapers. One of them was Luisa F. Miranda, a woman primary teacher in a northern town (Guimarães). The *Revista de Guimarães* opened its pages in 1922 to a competition for teachers to give their impressions of their teaching experience. This woman teacher's testimony was selected. At one point she showed her disappointment with the then new syllabus for primary schools which she thought

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[5] Preamble of the *Proposal for the 1923 Education Reform Act*, p.6.

presented some innovations but which she considered insufficient. It was necessary to include more vocational knowledge, she argued, so that children would have some useful knowledge with regard to their future work by the end of their compulsory schooling to confront "the terrible social crisis which can suddenly fall upon us" (i.e. the economic crisis in the final republican years). In her view, children should learn in schools "general ideas, training for any manual job, especially for those related to agriculture [including knowledge of] all necessary materials, tools and instruments"[6].

Quite often, in this period, educational policies concerning different levels of schooling demonstrated this trend by emphasising a solid relationship between education and work, in various ways. Firstly, the syllabus for primary schooling showed an increasing concern with work related subjects through the accent on the 'practical side of schooling'. Secondly, the appearance of 'higher primary schooling' ('escolas primárias superiores') - created by the *1911 Education Reform Act*, but not implemented until the 1919 reorganisation of education - appears also to be related to this trend. Originally it was intended to be "a level of polyvalent schooling, integrating academic preparation for further studies and aims of a practical or vocational nature" (Fernandes 1983:608). However these schools turned out to assume, predominantly, "the character of pure technical schools" (1983:610)[7]. Thirdly, especially between 1923 and 1925,

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[6] In *Revista de Guimarães*, vol. XXXII (2), p.165.

[7] Primary education, as stipulated by the *Education Reform Act of 1911*, was divided into elementary primary (3 years compulsory), complementary primary (2 years) and finally higher primary (3 years). In the *1919 Education Reform Act*, primary schooling was constituted by nursery education (3 years), general primary education (5 years compulsory) and higher primary (3 years).

educational policies were markedly oriented towards the expansion and development of technical schooling. These points will be explained in detail below.

- **the primary school**

Within the primary school, the question of the economic contribution of education had relevance, where, as Sampaio documents, it was stressed that:

> (...) the child, in the future, shall know the rudiments of the arts, agriculture, commerce and industry, becoming familiar, through an essentially practical education, with the land and the utensils man has put to his own service (Sampaio 1975:11).

Thus, education was given an eminently 'practical' function: the transmission of knowledge linked to the rural, commercial and industrial realities into which the majority of children would be integrated. It was a practical function not only in terms of form but also in terms of children's experience and life-determinant situations where they learned 'about things'; practical, above all, because of the utilitarian form knowledge should take for future life and social integration. This was an educational perspective that made the utility of knowledge a dominant theme, and which challenged a school tradition seen as 'passive', 'intellectual' and 'bookish'.

The 'practical' sense of this schooling was further underlined by the need for diversification according to the region in which it was located, such that children might have a better knowledge of local realities, i.e. of the forms of social production of the region. Thus, for example, the 1921 primary school syllabus contained a separate chapter on the type of activities and the

knowledge to be transmitted in schools situated on the coast, a zone dominated by fishing. If the same was not explicitly carried out with relation to the agricultural world, it was precisely because in some subjects, such as botany or 'craft workshops', agricultural knowledge had been included. Preparation for this agricultural world, in rural regions, was considered, in the words of a teacher, as an "absolute necessity, (...) it should be the basis of all learning, ministered within or outside of the school"[8]. Such a perspective echoed dominant positions assumed in various republican sectors.

Further, the 'practical sense' of this schooling was evident in the consistent inclusion, during the five years of primary schooling, of activities that foresaw the preparation and guidance of girls for the domestic world, and occupations linked to 'sewing and 'stitching', eventually linked to the textile industry. In fact, one can see in the same light the inclusion in teacher training courses, in 1919, of subjects like 'Notions of Agricultural and Rural Economy' and 'Notions of Domestic Economy, Sewing and Embroidery'. Sampaio notes precisely this when he states that one expected the (male) primary schoolteacher, as a result of his training, to intervene

> (...) in a positive way in the application of more evolved agricultural processes, in an environment characterised by the overwhelming dominance of the rural sector, imbued with a spirit of routine (Sampaio 1975:96).

- **'higher primary' schooling**

It was, however, in the 'higher primary' sector that the relationship education-economy was more pronounced. Created in

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8 In *Educação Social* , 1926, p. 391.

1911, but only organised and implemented in 1919, the 'higher primary' sector appeared enveloped in a polemic which brought face-to-face the problematic of the 'escola única' (single school for all, defended by Adolfo Lima and sectors of the labour movement) and the notion of a complementary primary schooling of a vocational nature. The conflicts and struggles over this sector of schooling occupied the thoughts and legislative activities of all Ministers of Public 'Instruction', particularly between 1921 and 1926.

The 'technological nature of the aims' which presided over the construction of the curricula of this sector of schooling, was described by Adolfo Lima, in an article in which he came out in defence of this sector, months after its final extinction with the 1926 coup (Lima 1926b:391). One of the aims was to provide the sector with a clearly marked character of specialisation from the second year (the course comprised three years). This character was classified as "tendentially technical and regional". Particular care was taken in the construction of curricula for design, modelling and shop and 'craft workshops' due to their importance to the sector - "they are the basis of an education by, and for, activity" (Lima 1926b:391). In 1919, home economics and commercial curricula were added to agricultural, industrial and seafaring activities, foreseen, initially, in 1911. Sampaio notes that from the first to the second reform, the vocational component was increased, which was perhaps related to the statement, in the diploma of the 1919 reorganisation, stressing that this type of schooling was of "particular interest to the large mass of the population" (Sampaio 1970:38). One cannot help note that 'higher primary' schooling was originally conceived as parallel to the

more socially valued, higher status, lyceum, possibly with the social aim of restricting the latter to the elite and "leading professions of Portuguese society". The need to guide the aspirations of the secondary school population towards technical preparation, thus "relieving congestion in the lyceum sector", was often referred to in legislation during the period 1921-1926 and the solution frequently suggested was the development of technical schooling as a channel for certain sectors of the working classes.

During the second half of this period, the 'higher primary' schools, whilst aiming to unite a 'general culture' with a 'technical culture', slipped progressively towards a form of schooling that was markedly vocational. Silvio Pélico, an educator, gave an account of the deep ambiguities embodied in these types of schools. He was aware that they were assuming, at the time of his writing, in 1923, clearly a vocational trend while at the same time they confronted the dilemma of sacrificing general culture to vocational studies or vice-versa (Pélico 1923:206). The republican politician and educator, João de Barros, also supported these schools as bringing together vocational and 'universal knowledge'. In his view, they were necessary to enable students to make the best choice of future occupation. He argued that, within the Republic, these schools represented a way of levelling different cultures. For that reason, he opposed their much debated extinction: "This would be highly inconsistent of the Republic" (Barros 1924:25).

Hence, there existed two diverse proposals for this sector of schooling: there were those who proposed an 'integral

education', meaning the continuation of the single basic school for all, which Adolfo Lima defended in the above-cited article as

> (...) that which best corresponds to the modern school, of a prolonged, active nature, based on general and technical culture, and which tends to occupy the exclusive unique, space of all education up to 15 years of age (Lima 1926b:393).

Lima argued, in further articles, that adopting the model of the farm-school or the factory-school, according to the region, constituted as much a refusal of "intellectualism" as it did a refusal of "vocationalism" - i.e. a vocational education for all children up to 15 years of age.

The second faction, which attributed all errors of implantation, organisation and teacher recruitment to the 'higher primary' sector, called for the substitution of the sector by 'regional vocational schools'[9].

Although in both positions described above the accent was on a preoccupation with the economic contribution of education, it is apparent that they were divided on the question of defining what counted as education for the working classes: a merely vocational education, or one which aimed to provide access for the working classes to a 'universal culture' including the humanist tradition and scientific knowledge and articulating it with 'practical knowledge and activitites'.

The type of institution for the education of the various social groups also divided the two factions. Lima proposed the 'Escola Única' (single school for all), the same for all classes, leading to the elimination of the distinction between industrial and commercial schools and the first years of lyceum (Lima

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[9] In *Diário de Notícias*, 7 September 1922, cited by Lima 1926b:394.

1924b). The other faction pleaded for the existence of two, or even three, distinct institutions according to the social groups for which they were intended.

The turbulent existence of 'higher primary' schooling, as a target of contradictory policies, revealed the conflict inherent in the various projects of 'ensino de continuação' (further schooling - this expression was used several times by Sérgio 1916;1918; 1923), particularly between 1921-1926. The project of two parallel career structures - the lyceum and the technical - finally won out in 1926. As a result - this is one historical example among many others - class interests were visibly able to influence the process of policy-making in education, in contradiction with the assumptions of the liberal egalitarian philosophy of the Republic.

- **the technical schools**

With the increasing accent placed on the link education-economy, there appeared, during the period 1924-25, a major impulse in the development of technical schools. In an official educational document, it was argued that the factory-school, and the industrial schools, should be further transformed into industrial training centres since it was deemed necessary

> (...) to attribute greater efficiency to technical-industrial elementary schooling, so that one is able to produce educated workers, disciplined and skilled in their professions[10].

By expanding the scope of factory-schools, it would also be possible to obtain "greater resources for development" through the sale of goods produced. Other educational policy measures in

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[10] *Decree* nº 9.626, 1 May 1924.

industrial schooling were justified by the need "to endow workers with the means necessary for them to conveniently carry out their jobs" and as a means of supplying "manpower to industrialists to be taken advantage of for the benefit of their industries" (ibidem). Meanwhile, the State's duty to support this quantitative and qualitative expansion of technical schooling was constantly being emphasised[11].

Arguments were also advanced based on the modernising example of central European countries and the United States in the development of technical schooling:

> The government has tried, within the limited means available to it, to develop and diffuse industrial and commercial technical schooling which all civilised countries consider primordial for their economic reorganisation.[12]

These arguments echoed the reasons advanced by Bento Carqueja (one of the members of the Commission of Reform of Technical Schooling in 1918) for example, who defended the need of Portugal to follow in the footsteps of those countries which, in the post-war effort, concentrated their energies on the project of technical schooling for training "good workers and office clerks". Thus, Portugal should follow "(...) the best initiatives taken abroad (...) and imitate the best models carried out there" (Carqueja 1918:6). Technical schooling in Germany and France was the example to follow due to the variety of institutions and the enormous effort made by the State to ally itself with industrialists and merchants which resulted in a solution "for the practical problem of technical learning" (Carqueja 1918:26).

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[11] *Decree* nº 9.721, 23 January 1924.

[12] *Decree* nº 10.119, 24 September 1924.

One may sum up some of the complexities of the late republican period and what may appear to have been meaningless events - such as the sudden disappearance of the proposed *1923 Education Reform Act* - in the following quote:

> The fact that the Camoesas's Reform was never discussed in Parliament is highly significant. From 1923 to 1926 the Republic, after its last unsuccessful attempt at reforming the education system, entered into its last period of major political crisis. And although various measures were adopted during this period in the area of vocational education, thus maintaining a preoccupation with education's economic contribution, it became noticeable that the hope and faith placed in education by the republicans as a promoter of social change was rapidly fading. For the democratic regime to prove its worth it had to provide the platform(s) necessary for ample public debate over, and discussion of public issues. The fact that teachers, technicians in the Ministry and educators generally were unable to find any *effective* organised political outlet for their views, such that might later see them fed through reform into the education system, was disastrous for the legitimation of the regime (eventually leading to a crisis of representation). This led gradually to a recognition of what Bento has termed the 'pedagogic illusion of republicanism' (Bento 1978) or, in other words, quoting Fernandes (1983:614-5), the 'revolutionary illusion of Sérgio', i.e. 'on the one hand to confer to education a determinant power with regard to social restructuring and, on the other, to trust the role of the vanguard in the hands of a so-called *ruling elite*' (Stoer and Araújo 1987:129, emphasis in the original).

In the context of what I have termed a second *mandate* concerned with productive policies, there occurs the need to ask what were the tensions and ambiguities for the overall project of the Republic which had as its aim the expansion of educational opportunities and the development of the human capacities of each child. Some of the implications of these tensions and ambiguities for mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching will be analysed below.

The Construction of Mass Schooling during the Republican Years

The development of 'higher primary schooling' was just one of the major innovations of the republican period, as Nóvoa rightly stresses (1987:533), and should be considered also in the context of three other major processes. These are the neutrality of schooling (in terms of religious education), its decentralisation and co-education (from 1919) which are of major importance in our understanding of mass schooling.

. the neutrality of schooling

The idea of the 'neutral school' - meaning the substitution of religious teaching by 'civic education' - was consistently emphasised throughout the republican period as a symbol of (jacobin) republicanism. In fact, religious (catholic) education was banned from all forms of schooling from 5 October 1910 and was only reintroduced into State schooling after the coup of 28 May 1926. Secular schooling was enforced rigorously by the republicans and any move to change it gave rise to protests. Educational journals also reported news concerning teachers who did not follow the regulations of a lay school. For instance, in 1913, a republican teachers' journal, *A Federação Escolar*, told the story of a woman teacher who in the northern interior of the country (FozCoa, Douro) used to teach catechism to her pupils after school. She was reprimanded by an inspector and as a consequence tendered her resignation on the grounds that her catholic beliefs were not compatible with the inspector's interdiction[13]. This kind of event

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[13] In *A Federação Escolar* 3rd phase, year II (58), 6 Apr 1913.

has to be understood in terms of the climate of harsh relations existing between the Catholic Church and the Republican State and of frequent conflicts between local priests and secular teachers. The same educational magazine also published news of local groups of 'fanatical' women and men, headed by the village priest, attacking teachers in schools and throwing stones at their homes, especially when State schools occupied priests' parish residences (from where priests had been expelled)[14].

- **decentralisation of the school system**

Portugal experienced the process of decentralisation for the second time[15]. Decentralisation represented a critical concern within Republicanism. It was pursued on the assumption that the 'people' would be reinstated in a process which belonged to them in their own right (see Santos 1913:221). Between 1911-1918, the administration and control of primary schooling was given to municipalities: they were in charge of their budgets, and the organisation of processes for the creation of new schools; they were also in charge of enforcing compulsory schooling; and empowered to contract, transfer and dismiss teachers[16].

The attitude of teachers concerning decentralisation was one of mixed feelings: the experience of thirty years before had not been very encouraging. First of all, teachers' salaries were not paid; secondly, local officials had been considered ignorant by teachers; finally, power relations outside of main towns were dominated by oligarchies and systems of social patronage. Twenty

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14 In *A Federação Escolar* 3rd phase, year II (104), 22 Feb 1914.

15 The first time was between 1878-1892, under the *1878 Education Reform Act* (see chapter 2).

16 In *1911 Education Reform Act*, art. 63.

or thirty years later, things had hardly changed in small villages. Teachers, mainly republicans, could agree with the principle of decentralisation but they resisted such change given the actual conditions of Portuguese society. Among the many comments which appeared in newspapers and journals, I have selected one written by a woman teacher in 1912, as a good example of this kind of perspective:

> Decentralisation is without any doubt an aspiration of the modern mind. However our society is not yet prepared for it, because it is highly divided by political party fanaticism and a negative heritage from the Monarchy. Decentralisation will be a good thing when the people have received and assimilated an education based on good moral principles and civility. The school has to educate several generations under the orientation of the Republic. Only after this, can decentralisation be launched. To throw the teacher and the school into this situation, under the control of far away municipalities is, in my view, the same as suffocating 'instruction' in a sea of persecution and moral and financial misery. We already have the experience of 1878[17].

Certainly, other reasons could explain the resistance of teachers. One of these reasons appears to be related to their professional status: decentralisation meant that local officials were perceived as more competent than teachers, as able to judge who was to be hired or fired from a teaching post. Nóvoa (1987) summarises this situation:

> Primary teachers maintained a lengthy struggle to confirm their quality as teaching experts and their status as specialists; hence they were able to distance themselves from the influence of families and local communities through their condition as civil servants, exclusively dependent upon central state authorities. They were afraid that decentralisation contributed to calling into question the road that had been travelled along for the past century and a half and to alter their professional status (Nóvoa 1987:537-8).

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17 Maria Rosa d'Oliveira, in *A Federação Escolar* 3rd phase, I, (20), 19 July 1912.

As in the first experience of decentralisation, once again teachers' salaries were not paid. Education journals carried news of the debts municipalities owed to teachers. There were also complaints about the political and social pressures to which teachers were submitted from local notables. And teachers perceived officials working in local municipalities as ignorant and even hostile with regard to education matters[18].

As a consequence of this state of affairs, or, at least partially, decentralisation was abolished in 1918. In 1919, in the wake of the 'new Republic', the government created a different system of decentralisation: local committees ('juntas escolares') were constituted by three teachers, elected by their local colleagues and five other local officials. Between 1919 and 1925 this system was in effect. Nóvoa (1987) stresses that the 'juntas escolares' were controlled mainly by teachers: local officials did not participate in the process either because they did not agree with the restriction of their former attributes or because they felt reluctant to compete with teachers on their own terrain (Nóvoa 1987:540).

Teachers supported this process of decentralisation. It is worth quoting Nóvoa here concerning the relationship between activism among teachers and the existence of 'juntas escolares'.

> It is very important to stress that the period of existence of 'juntas escolares' corresponds to the golden age of teachers' union activity. This was not a haphazard process; on the contrary it corroborates the firm relationship which existed between primary teachers socio-professional status and the role they were called on to play in the organisation of the school system. This has been clearly understood by the union leaders who quite often judged the process of 'juntas escolares' as a process of 'professional dignity' (Nóvoa 1987:541).

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[18] See, for instance, A Federação Escolar. 3rd phase, 6 (303), 5 January 1918; 7 (327), 22 June 1918.

In 1925, a decree was published removing from 'juntas escolares' many of their most important conditions for intervention. Teachers reacted against this decree and struggled to win back the former influence of these committees. They finally won just some days before the coup of 28th May 1926 (Nóvoa 1987). As a result, the experience of educational decentralisation ended with the 'new order' that was soon to be implemented.

- **co-education**

The third process that is to be examined is co-education[19]. In 1911 compulsory schooling was organised for each sex separately. However, this did not constitute an impediment to the continuation of mixed schools from the last phase of the Monarchy. As mentioned previously, there were 19 mixed schools in 1881 and 325 in 1899 (see table 2, in chapter 2). However, we do not know what 'mixed schools' meant exactly at the time. Were the classrooms mixed at the end of the nineteenth-century? or were the schools mixed but the sexes still taught separately, at different times of the day? Official documents and educators' writings do not provide us with complete information. What is known is that co-education did not exist in these schools: given that girls and boys were assumed to have different identities, they were allocated to different subjects, at least in specific areas of the curriculum.

The *1911 Education Reform Act* explicitly stated that children between 7 and 14 were to be taught in single-sex primary schools. Mixed schools were to be created only where the school

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[19] In 1911 it was announced that co-education was to be implemented in 'higher primary' schools and in the new Teacher Education Colleges. Both institutions only came to life in 1919.

population was low[20]. As can be seen below (table 1), between 1911 and 1919 mixed schools continued to grow both in real numbers and percentage terms. In 1911-12, mixed schools constituted around 18% of the total number of schools and in 1918-1919, 21%. It was a 'retarded' situation if compared to England where these kinds of schools (called 'co-educational') comprised 65% at the beginning of the century (Brehony 1984:4). However, it looks as if a common feature existed between these processes in both countries: they were implemented mainly for economic reasons (Brehony 1984; Pestana 1915) and the Portuguese official documents make the reasons for this quite explicit.

Although most of the school subjects were the same in any type of school, 'craft workshops' for boys and girls were to be different, following the role models for each gender. It may be added that the gap between both gender groups in terms of curricula was apparently less than fifty years before. As mentioned earlier, girls, under the terms of the *1878 Education Reform Act*, were taught the main areas of the academic curriculum, but were excluded from basic notions of agriculture, choral singing, gymnastics, and the rights and duties of citizens which constituted the boys' curriculum. Instead they were taught the duties of the mother, embroidery, lacemaking, the making of flowers, and the cutting of garments. This contrasts with girls living in the first phase of the Republic, who, when attending a State school, could expect to be taught the same curriculum as boys (at least, if official documents are to be believed), except in the area of 'craft' where needlework was stated as specifically for girls.

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[20] In *1911 Education Reform Act*, art. 26.

'Co-education' was introduced in compulsory education by the 1919 reorganisation of primary schooling. The official document did not explain what it meant by the new process to be implemented in schools[21]. One gets the impression that the legislator assumed a taken-for-granted situation, as if everyone understood what it meant. It appears to convey a rather similar situation to the former mixed school. It was stated explicitly that boys and girls were to be taught together although the law also accepted that separate schools continued to exist[22]. Was this real co-education in the sense that not only the spaces, units of time, agents of teaching and methods were the same, but also the contents, including 'crafts'? The syllabus approved in 1921 was ambiguous with regard to 'craft subjects': in the first three years, besides the common activities for both sexes, there existed an area called needlework, but only in the last two years (in a total of five), was needlework presented as a girl's activity[23]. Was the legal document really implying that boys were to be taught needlework in the first years? In chapter 8, on discussing perspectives on women's education and role in society, I shall return to the question of co-education when examining the debates that occurred in Portuguese society during the Republican years and the period of transition to Estado Novo.

To what extent was the co-educational school applied? Created in 1919, with its syllabus being approved in 1921, it had a short life, for some time after the coup of 28th May 1926, co-education was abolished. As far as can be ascertained, there are no

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21 The document only stated that "for (compulsory) primary schools the co-educational regime is adopted" (art. 7, *decree* 5787 - B, 10 May 1919).

22 *Decree* 6137, 29 Sept. 1919, art. 52.

23 *Decree* 7311, 15 Feb 1921.

evaluations of the co-educational experience in State schools during these 8 years. Only one example of co-education, in a private school run by the anarchist movement, has so far come to light (see Candeias 1992)[24].

After having reviewed some of the major contributions of the Republic concerning mass schooling, it needs to be noted that, apparently, educational projects expressed in legal documents were less inventive in their practical application than the republican discourse implied in all its rhetoric of the centrality of primary education and education in general. It may be said that, although this discourse represented a break in relation to the discourse of the Monarchy, in both periods, there still existed many continuities in the implementation of educational policies.

In 1913, a republican government declared that many of the monarchist laws for schooling were still in effect (Adão 1984). Even the new *1911 Education Reform Act* did not change some of its most important orientations. For instance, the number of years of compulsory schooling was the same - three years. Only later, in the 1919 primary school reorganisation, did compulsory schooling change to five years. Another continuity concerned the low level of school attendance, which the Republic did not manage to change in spite of its emphasis on this matter[25]. The law of compulsory

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[24] António Candeias (1992) recently completed his PhD dissertation about the life of an educational institution, the Escola Oficina nº1 (1905-1930), which was initially created by the masons and later became a model of libertarian education, i.e. it aimed to develop individual freedom and autonomy for children while being rigorous with regard to cognitive learning and promoting attitudes of social justice and tolerance for others.

[25] Examining another level of the education system, the high school sector ('liceu'), Pulido Valente points out that the number of students was 10.410, in 1910. By 1926, this number had increased to 15.105 (Valente 1973:107), that is an increase of less than five thousand students in a period of sixteen years. Only 4.5% of all pupils in primary schools went to the lyceum (ibidem:113).

schooling continued to exist without being fully applied. I shall examine this question in more detail below. Further, many educators referred to the problem of the scarcity of national budgets for education which constituted another continuity with the Monarchy. One of them, was the educator Alves dos Santos (1913) who pointed out that with such a low budget, it was only possible to maintain what already existed in primary education in the last phase of the Monarchy. It was because of this situation that at the end of the year of 1911, the government had suspended the *1911 Education Reform Act* (1913:243). In these conditions school materials and buildings had not improved much either. Additionally, teaching methods were quite traditional. This situation was commented upon by Alves dos Santos (1913) in these terms:

> Without any doubt the schools of Lisbon are in a backward state given that the function which they perform is still exactly the same as the one judged worthwhile a hundred years ago! (Santos 1913: 290).

Nóvoa also underlines that there were continuities between the policies of both regimes, although republicans presented their policies as if in contrast to the former ones: "The republicans never understood that their support for 'instruction' could be identified more along a line of continuity in relation to the last phase of the monarchy than as break to it". (Nóvoa 1989b:XIII).

As a result, in part, of the exposure of the semiperipheral State to different and opposite pressures from the various *mandates* - the concern to expand education for the masses, the development of human capacities in each child, and a closer relationship between schooling and work - mass schooling

developed in an uneven way in the context of political instability. The rate of illiteracy decreased little during the first ten years: in 1910, it was 76.1%, and in 1920, 70.5% (Fernandes 1983:606). The primary school network which was a central concern for republican politicians, also developed slowly. In 1911, in the early days of the Republic, more that eight hundred primary schools were created by decree, but only a quarter of them actually came to work[26].

In presenting statistical data about school attendance, the number of schools and pupils in primary education, it is useful to stress that there is no agreement among authors who have studied the construction of mass schooling or the expansion of literacy during the Republic about how accurately the data reflects actual growth. Portuguese educational statistics, gathered at the time, are not very reliable. They were based on data sent by teachers and school inspectors and the educational statisticians acknowledged at the time that "there were many errors and gaps"[27]. For this reason, one of the institutions responsible for presenting education statistics, decided to calculate the number of children of school age (between 7 and 14 years old) "on the basis of the growth of the population presented in the census of 1900 and 1911". In other documents it was decided to use different criteria. As a consequence, one is presented with different data on the same topic.[28] After having

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[26] Nóvoa in the Introduction to the study on *1911 Education Reform Act.*

[27] In *O Ensino Primário, 1915-1919,* 1923:4.

[28] During many years one statistical source (*Anuário Estatístico*) presented the number of pupils and of schools by gender, and suddenly without any explanation it omitted the data organised by gender and only presented the total number of schools. Such was the case for the data related to the years between 1922-23 and 1925-26.

examined the various sources the following table was constructed with the belief that the data is probably as reliable as possible:

table 1
Number of Primary Schools
1911-1926

Years	Boys Schools	Girls Schools	Mixed Sch	Total N Schools
1911-12	2916	1999	1106	6021
1915-16	2940	2145	1219	6304
1918-19	2938	2228	1397	6563
1922-23	-	-	-	6475
1925-26	-	-	-	6657

Source: Ensino Primário Oficial 1910-1915
Ensino Primário Oficial 1915-1919
Anuário Estatístico, 1917 to 1926

From 1919 until 1932 there is no indication in any official statistics of the number of boys' or girls' schools. We may doubt that they really ceased to exist once co-education was launched in 1919. It is difficult to believe that all municipalities were so efficient in the transformation from single-sex to co-educational schools when the 1919 official document accepted that single-sex schools could continue "whenever it was not possible to apply co-education".

Although the figures probably contain some inaccuracy, it seems that, over a period of 14 years, from 1911-12 to 1925-26, 636 new schools were opened representing a 10.6% increase in the school network. The number of schools created by legal regulation was much higher but, as the statistical sources noted, many of them never came into existence for various reasons. The percentage is not impressive given all the emphasis on the central role education was to play in republican society. Looking at the annual average rate of growth of primary schools, this becomes

quite evident with periods where there is small growth and others where there is negative growth[29].

Examining school enrollments also presents its problems, depending on which source is used. For instance, Aúrea Adão pointed out that 43.9 % of children of school age were enrolled in schools, in 1909-1910, the last monarchist year. In 1915-16 school attendance did not improve: on the contrary school enrollments fell dramatically with only 31.2% of school age children in schools (1984::47)[30]. Both Sampaio (1975) and Adão (1984) present rather similar percentages, around 25% of school attendance[31] in 1918-1919 while the percentage presented by Nóvoa (1987) for the same academic year is 30.3% (1987:575). Nóvoa claims that the percentage of school attendance hardly changed throughout the Republic given that in 1910 it was already 29.3% (1987:575). Therefore although all three authors agree that mass schooling was ineffectual during the Republic, they differ on the actual percentages that represent the republican construction of mass schooling. From the various available sources, the

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[29] **Table 1a Annual average rate of growth of primary schools**

	Total %	% Boys Sch.	% Girls Sch.	% Mixed Sch
1912-16	1.15	0.2	1.78	2.46
1916-19	1.35	-0.02	1.27	4.64
1919-23	-0.34	-	-	-
1923-26	0.93	-	-	-

[30] The authors referred to above attempt to combine data from different sources but not always very successfully. Adão (1984) and Sampaio (1975) were confronted with a number of children in school age (between 6 and 14) which doubled more or less in the space of 8 years (from 670.200 in 1911-12 to 1.128.100 children in school age in 1918-1919, numbers presented by Sampaio 1975:44) on the basis of the *Anuário Estatístico.* From these numbers, it seems that Portugal experienced a rapid growth of the young population which almost doubled in the space of 8 years. These numbers are contested by Nóvoa (1987) who uses other sources (such as the *Population General Census*) where the growth of the young population follows a more regular pattern.

[31] 29.7 for boys and 21.4 for girls, for the first author, and 29.9% of all boys and 21% of all girls, for the second author.

following table attempts to demonstrate the irregularity and uneveness of school attendance during the republican period.

table 2
Number of School Enrollments
in Primary Schools
1910/1926

years	Tot N Sch. Rolls	% Girls' rolls
1909-10	272.293	39.2
1915-16	342.981	40.8
1919-20	289.781	40.7
1925-26	316.888	40.7

Sources: Nóvoa 1987:575; Oliveira [1936]:889); and *Anuário Estatístico* 1926

From this table, school enrollments increased between 1911 and 1916, but after this, they began to decrease, at least until 1919; in the last years of the Republic they were up again[32]. The explanation given for the decreasing school enrollments from 1915 to 1919, available at the time, stresses that this could be the result of a lack of the State's capacity to guarantee social conditions for school attendance as well as due to the absence of data with regard to the actual number of children in school (i.e. the non-existence of a reliable school census). A third factor suggested that the beginning of co-education in schools contributed to the falling enrollments (*Ensino Primário Oficial*, 1923). This last argument is rather confusing: the decree which established co-education was published on 10th May 1919 and the school rolls referred to the academic year of 1918-1919. Recent authors tend

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[32] **Table 2a** **Annual average rate of growth of school enrolments**

	Total %
1910-16	3.92
1916-20	-0.28
1920-26	1.5

either to emphasise the lack of a reliable school census (Sampaio 1975) or to see school rolls decreasing as a consequence of World War I (Adão 1984).

As may be expected, the views of teachers and educators in general were critical of the low attendance in schools. They searched for explanations with regard to this situation. Some stressed the ignorance of the Portuguese, in particular the peasants, unable to recognise the advantages of 'instruction', even for "racial preservation" (Santos 1913:216; Miranda 1922). For others, the explanation lay in the permanent political struggle which characterised the regime, contributing to the lack of a coherent orientation for educational policies (Barros 1920). Still others located the problem in the very existence of State education: the State was not competent to provide education (Campos 1919). However, many of the teacher's testimonies stressed that there was a lack of support from the State with regard to provide schools with adequate and attractive conditions for children's attendance, and to pay teachers according to the "high mission" teachers needed to fulfill in distant villages[33].

In 1919, educational policies assumed the expansion of compulsory schooling incorporating many ingredients supported by the 'Escola Nova' ('New Education'). But, in fact, the great effort of education in the last phase of the Republic centred on the expansion of technical schools and the elimination of other educative forms such as the 'higher primary' schools. Compulsory

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[33] One of the most impressive pictures that I get from most of the teachers' journals is the constant mention of the insufficicent and unjust salary they received from the State which contrasted with the rhetoric on the importance of the role of the teacher. See for instance, from different teachers' journals: *A Federação Escolar*, 3rd phase, 7 (328), 29 June 1918; *O Professor Primário*, VI (229), 6 March 1924; *Educação Nova*, II (13), July 1925; *Revista Escolar*, 1, January 1921, 19-22.

schooling gained neither the attention nor the efforts of education politicians in a sustained way.

The problems of accumulation in the semiperipheral context of Portugal continued to exist. The State attempted, at the beginning of the republican experience, to legitimate its intervention by proclaiming its main belief in 'instruction' and education. But some years later, it was already pretty clear that the contribution of the Republic to education was not as extensive as the educative rhetoric implied. After 1919, a belief in the capacity of the Republican State was renewed. This did not last long. Hence legitimation problems of the regime became once again visible. At the same time, the Republican State was confronting serious problems of keeping order in the streets - to provide the context for an ongoing accumulation. In such a cluster of contradictions, the end of the Republican State with the coup of 28th May 1926 was probably an expected outcome. Mass schooling developed at a slower rate than the educational rhetoric assumed. Did the 'feminisation' of teaching continue to grow? It is to this issue that I shall return in the next section.

Educational Policies and the 'Feminisation' of Teaching

According to Nóvoa, the teaching profession in particular after 1919 acquired a new prestige and a greater recognition of its importance and contribution to the development of republican ideals: if the XXth century was the "school's golden age" (Nóvoa 1987:586), the final period of the Republic was "the teachers' golden age, (...) the period where the cultural and social action of primary teachers was more remarkable (...) [and] when their social

and economic status attained its highest point " (1987:609-10). In fact, Nóvoa (1987) is able to compare the salaries of different occupational categories for the years 1915, 1919 and 1925 including lieutenant, 3rd administrative officer, primary teacher, factory and rural workers. Between 1919 and 1925, teachers got a rise in their salaries whilst not all the above occupations were able to get the same. For the first time, international reports stressed the better economic situation of Portuguese teachers which was similar to Japanese, Belgian and French teachers, and ahead of Italian and Russian teachers (see Nóvoa 1987:623-5). Moreover, in the process of struggle and negotiation between the teaching profession and the republican governments, other teaching conditions were also improved. For example, the student/teacher ratio dropped from 47.8 in 1916, to 43.3 in 1921 and to 38 in 1926 (Mónica 1975:484). It is in this context that it is necessary to analyse the process of 'feminisation' in the Portuguese education system in order to become aware of possible changes since the end of the nineteenth-century. It seems clear that the number of women teachers was increasing at a time when the teaching profession was enjoying better working conditions than at the turn of the century. Therefore, the explanations of women teacher's work in terms of 'cheapness' are not supported by the historical analysis of this period.

In 1910, 52.2% of teachers were women, thus constituting the majority within the profession. In 1916-1917, they rose to 60.2. In 1925-26, their percentage grew to 66.2%.

table 3
Number of Women and Men Primary Teachers
1910-1926

	N. Men Teachers	N. Women Teachers	% WT
1910-11	2777	3031	52.2
1915-16	3033	4594	60.2
1918-19	3038	4902	61.7
1925-26	2865	5619	66.2

Source: *Ensino Primário Oficial 1910-1915*
Ensino Primário Oficial 1915-1919
Anuário Estatístico 1926

From this table it is clear that the proportion of women teachers continued to expand with the installation of the republican regime. Between 1911 and 1926 the percentage of women teachers increased circa 14%.

A similar trend was to be seen in teacher training colleges, even with a more impressive percentage in women trainees:

table 4
Number of Women and Men Students in
Teacher Training Colleges
1910-1926

	N. Men Students	N. Women Students	% WS
1918-19	761	2801	78.6
1920-21	113	449	79.8
1922-23	94	543	85.2
1925-26	90	724	88.9

Source: *Anuário Estatístico 1919,1921,1923,1926*

Insofar as these numbers are reliable, the change in republican policies concerning teacher training colleges is quite obvious. From 1919 onwards, the reorganisation of teacher education, reducing to three the number of Teacher Colleges meant a reduction in their student numbers. This is explained, in Novoa's view, as an attempt to reduce teacher unemployment and to

reinforce a new curriculum based on specific subjects applicable to teachers' education (see Nóvoa 1987: 670). Although the student teacher intake in the colleges decreased from this year on, the number of female students increased considerably, indicating further developments in the 'feminisation' of teaching in the years to come.

In contrast, the number of women teachers in these colleges was quite low in comparison with male colleagues and especially in terms of the actual student intake in these institutions and the number of women teachers in the occupation. Before the reorganisation which took place in 1919, they constituted a quarter of the total. After that year, women teachers' visibility in teacher education colleges was severely reduced, with a slight increase in the following years:

table 5
Number of Women and Men Teachers
in Teacher Training Colleges
1910-1926

	N. Men Teachers	N. Women Teachers	% WT
1918-19	145	50	25.6
1920-21	64	8	11.1
1922-23	77	12	13.4
1925-26	76	13	14.6

Source: *Anuário Estatístico 1919,1921,1923,1926*

What is interesting is the fact that republican policies in education emphasised rhetorically the image of the teacher as a 'missionary', as a 'community leader', as an 'arbiter of the nation', images that, in the context of patriarchal relations, were masculine. The *1911 Education Reform Act* stressed that primary teachers were the "moral arbiters of the destinies of the

Fatherland": it was necessary to grant teachers the economic independence necessary to fulfil this mission.

This Reform Act also directed its attention to those who were in charge of young children between 4 and 7 years of age. It was a non-compulsory level of schooling. At this point, the *1911 Education Act* clearly identified gendered agents: only women teachers were to be employed in nurseries and playschools. Another official document stated later that "every woman teacher [in playgroups] needs to play the role of a true mother as much as possible"[34]. The fact that they were called 'teachers', and not 'childminders' ('mestras' or 'jardineiras'[35]) may be significant: it could be interpreted as an attempt to grant prestige to the task of educating young children, attracting women to this level of the education system and perhaps attempting to reduce the number of women teachers in primary schools. In contrast with the clear gender identification in teaching young chidren, the emphasis on the teacher's moral role in primary schools, in the context of patriarchal relations, could indicate that primary teaching needed, preferably, a male workforce. Hence, from this perspective, primary teaching could regain its former status as a predominantly male profession.

A republican newspaper published an article (in 1932, after the fall of the first Republic) arguing that women teachers were not suitable for teaching because of "their physical appearance, their sex, their fragility". The fact of being mothers and wives at the same time made them unable to "(...) spread fair ideas, fight vices, guide material improvement, extinguish

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34 *Decree* 6348, 14 Jan 1920.

35 In French, the word is 'jardinières', similar to the Portuguese word.

prejudices, incite enterprises, etc"[36]. The male image of the teacher as the "missionary of democracy" was so strongly diffused at the time that women were not seen as properly suited for teaching, at least within fractions of the republican movement. Mostly it was assumed that women were not prepared to play the important role of defending a fragile democracy, which needed to be strengthened through schooling and community involvement. In the above mentioned article, it was said that the profession should be led by a

> (...) legion of good teachers, well prepared for the difficult task [of fighting] the complete ignorance spread in the streets, among the peasants, within the families, wherever the teacher must make people feel his salutary and purifying action.

Instead, the profession was being led overwhelmingly by an 'alluvium' of women teachers which, obviously, in the view of the author of the article, was noxious to the teaching profession. Very much influenced by 'positivist' theories, particularly by Comte, many republicans tended to see women in the 'metaphysical state', as objects of manipulation by the Catholic Church. Given this, women needed to be educated. Undoubtedly there were tensions and contradictions in the perspectives that republicans maintained on women's role in society, their education and franchise, to which I will return in chapter 8.

Indications remain that there were also other attempts to restrict the number of women teachers in primary schools. In the *1911 Education Reform Act,* mixed schools and girls' schools were to be taught by women teachers. But in boys' schools apparently only men teachers would be accepted. Therefore this

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[36] in *Republica*, 20 July 1932; also quoted in F. Monica 1977:210.

Reform Act did not accept, as the former Reform Acts of 1878 and 1901 did, that women teachers should teach in boys' schools when there was a lack of men teachers. Later, the 1919 reorganisation of primary education, in tandem with the launching of co-education in primary schools, stated that in schools of two or four posts, an equal number of men and women teachers should be appointed; in schools with an odd number of posts (3 or 5 places), women were to outnumber men; only in schools of six or more posts, could women teachers exceed men teachers without restrictions[37]. When the school only had one teacher, a woman teacher was to be selected[38], following the former tradition implemented by the *1878 Education Reform Act* and the *1911 Education Reform Act*[39]. That such regulations caused dissatisfaction is clear from a decree published some years later. The new regulation indicated that even in schools with six or more posts, an equal number of male and female teachers was to be retained: "it is necessary to establish an equilibrium so that men as well as women teachers are present in primary schools"[40]. However, the following year, this last regulation was annulled in favour of the one contained in the 1919 reorganisation of primary schooling referred to above[41].

Further, the 1919 reorganisation also stated that women teachers should take charge of the first three years of compulsory schooling, whilst the last two years of schooling were to be taught by men. However, the official document also underlined

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37 *Decree* nº 6137, 29 Sept 1919, art. 83º.
38 *decree* nº 6755, 10 July 1920.
39 *1911 Education Reform Act*, art.29
40 *Decree* nº 9561, 1 Apr 1924.
41 *Decree* nº 10984, 31 Jul 1925.

that, if a man "had the professional preparation to teach the first three classes", he could take charge of them. What is revealing is that this document did not expand the proposal to allow women to teach the last two years of primary schooling. Hence it seems that the task of filling the posts in a primary school in 1919 was quite complex: firstly, it was necessary to get a fair balance between the two sexes in relation to teacher numbers, i.e. increase the number of male teachers; secondly, it was necessary to take into account the age of children and complexity of knowledge which was considered as directly related to the gender of the teacher.

It may be concluded that the construction of the relations between the two genders within the primary school was a conflictual process. The 'feminisation' of primary schools was problematic for republican politicians, particularly those influenced by positivist contributions. The tensions resulting from this conflictual process may not have been immediately apparent. 'Freedom, Equality and Fraternity' echoed in republican minds as guidelines for action. Although deep contradictions existed in the construction of the political and social space in Portugal, at that time, these guidelines might have contributed, for instance, to securing basic rights for women teachers such as the access to similar forms of education and training, the right to vote in elections for the local education boards or even the right to earn the same salary as that of their male colleagues. In fact, women teachers in the republican period continued to be paid the same as men teachers. And, in Teacher Colleges, women teachers began to earn the same salaries as men for the first time (see chapters 1 and 2).

Moreover, the *1911 Education Reform Act* reorganised teacher education in new training institutions where 'co-education' was implemented mainly in the subjects common to both sexes. Separate courses were restricted to some subjects: women were to be taught gardening, horticulture, domestic economy and needlework; they were to have contact with the working of a maternity ward. Men teachers were to be taught agriculture, military exercises and swimming[42].

Another important point to consider about primary teaching is the fact that women teachers tended to occupy the lowest positions within it. The statistics which exist nowadays are very incomplete. There is no possibility of knowing how many teachers had tenure or temporary contracts. Probably the vast majority of rural teachers were women, teaching in remote places. How many were school directors in urban schools? Probably not many, at least considerably less than their majority in the profession would lead us to expect. There were no women inspectors at primary level. Although the law anticipated the possibility of women becoming inspectors of nursery schools, regarding primary schooling, it was stated clearly that women teachers could not become inspectors[43].

To sum up briefly this long section on the construction of mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching during the republican years, in particular the last ones, the somewhat uneven character of the first process and the sustained progression of the second should be emphasised. In contrast with the former period

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42 *1911 Education Reform Act*, art. 111 & 112.
43 *Decree* nº 6137, 29 Set 1919.

analysed (1870-1910), where both processes developed in an articulated way, the 'feminisation' of teaching appears to gain some 'autonomy' from mass schooling, suggesting a development which takes on its own character. As a result of 'feminisation', teaching appears therefore to have gained an image as *women's work*, in this period, attracting a growing number of women. What is quite unexpected, given traditional explanations about the 'feminisation' of teaching as downgrading the economic status of the profession, is that 'feminisation' continued throughout a period in which the teaching profession gained better economic conditions and wider recognition of its merits.

Conclusion

It is not easy to deal with this historical period when political processes played such a visible role. However, this is an important period for our understanding of the construction of mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching, helping us to question further the relationship between both processes. I wonder if the causal link between the 'feminisation' of teaching and the construction of mass schooling, as in the period 1870-1910 was maintained. Another guiding issue was the desire to understand whether the Portuguese State had continued to encourage the expansion of women teachers' numbers as in the former period. Additionally, it was possible to question whether *maternalism* still prevailed over other ideologies of women's relationship to teaching.

From the analysis in this chapter, 'feminisation' of teaching appears to have gained some autonomy from the pace of

development of mass schooling: the number of women teachers grew unceasingly, while mass schooling developed in an uneven way, at least when comparing school networks and pupil enrollments.

The dissimilar development between both processes leads us to analyse the activity of the Republican State towards mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching. In relation to the first, it was possible to reveal the discrepancy between the rhetoric about the importance of 'instruction' and education for the working classes and the irregular construction of mass schooling. In relation to the second, there were some visible attempts from the State, in the same period, if not to decrease, at least to restrict the proportion of women teachers in primary schools. Between 1911 and 1919, nursery schools were presented as the places *par excellence* of women's teaching activity outside the domestic sphere, while primary schooling was presented with images of the male world. Between 1919 and 1926, with the implementation of co-education in primary schools, it was stated that women teachers should be in charge of the first three classes, and men teachers, of the last two.

Therefore, it may be said that the Republic was not able to obtain a 'fair balance of the sexes' in primary teaching as some official documents claimed. To teach in a primary school was, in this period, already seen as *women's work*, at least, at the level of the social actors - i.e. of the women who valued an autonomous life or had to make a living for themselves and their dependents. As will be seen in chapter 9, where the voices of women teachers through their life histories will become audible, in republican families of the low middle or middle classes (or even of the

Northern landowners with several children), daughters were to be prepared for paid work. Teaching was one of the few possible options (if not the only one). Shop assistants or telegraphists did not have the social status that teaching could offer to such families. Within these socio-political groups, teaching was endowed with an aura of an occupation suited to women's 'nature'. The activities of women as mothers and as teachers of small children became to be perceived more in terms of a continuity than a rupture.

However, at the level of the State, this image of teaching could not be found. As has been stressed several times in this chapter, the political rhetoric about the role of the teacher was based on images taken from the public world of male activities. That the State was able to maintain such a rhetoric during the republican period, when the actual intake of the teaching force was mainly female, raises some interesting questions. What induced the State to conceal this? Was this a strategy to deal with the problems of legitimation created by a predominantly female intake? or, was it an attempt to attract men to primary teaching? Both postulates could actually co-exist in the sense that both had to do with the problems of legitimation confronting the capitalist State. In the context of slow accumulation, where the pressures upon the State to secure a safer political context for capitalist accumulation were frequent (constantly put at risk with monarchist uprisings, a high rate of cabinet turnover, strikes from the working classes for better work conditions and opposition from anarchist political groups and even within the republican ranks) the problems of legitimation in employing increasing numbers of women teachers gains a new meaning. Probably, they

were perceived as 'cheaper' and more 'amenable' members of the workforce, thus offering a functional response to some of the problems confronted by the State in primary schooling. However, as pointed out already in chapter 1, the issues were more complex because the Republican State did not accept women as *citizens*, denying them the right to vote in 1913 (as seen in chapter 5; I will return to this in chapter 8). Further, given the context of patriarchal relations, women teachers were encircled in a web of social relationships which did not empower them in the same way as men teachers to be leaders of the rural community as the rhetoric of the Republican State claimed. In that sense, they could not fulfill the social function that the Republican State envisaged for the teachers' role.

As far as the patriarchal State is concerned, it changed during this period, accomodating some of the pressures that social movements, such as the women's groups particularly via the female masonic groups and feminist organisations, put upon it. At the same time, other pressures, such as the case of women's franchise, were blocked. Some of these changes will be incorporated into chapter 8 when confronting ideologies about the role of women in Portuguese society. Regarding women in education, these changes appear to have promoted a more equal treatment of girls in schools mainly via the regime of co-education, perceived as able to provide equality of opportunity for them. The opportunity for women to fill posts in primary schools in such impressive numbers can also be seen as part of the changes that the patriarchal State implemented. Certainly, some of the rights that, for instance, women primary teachers acquired at the end of the nineteenth-century - the right to earn the same salary

as their male peers, as well as the right to forms of teacher education and a wider definition of the woman teacher's job - which they were able to maintain during the republican years (albeit not exactly in the same forms) should be acknowledged as one of the changes that the patriarchal State was experiencing. This was probably a response, in part, to the pressure exerted by women and the organised groups in which they participated. Hence, what was being witnessed at the time, was what Walby (1990) refers to as the change from 'private forms of patriarchy' to more 'public forms of patriarchy' although in a movement of small, modest and contradictory changes.

Did the last republican period already announce the period of transition to the 'Estado Novo'? What changes did mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching experience in the first years of the dictatorship? It is to these (and other) questions that I shall turn in the next chapter, attempting to clarify the change in the *mandates* for education as well as the educational policies following the political and social changes introduced by the military coup of 28 May 1926.

Chapter 7

'Back to Strict Gender Lines' in Primary Teaching - Pragmatic Realism and Compartmentalisation in the Educational Policies of the Dictatorship (1926-1933)

Introduction

During the first years of the conservative Military Dictatorship initiated on 28 May 1926, the conflictual gender relations in primary schooling and the effects they had upon primary teaching played a more visible role than previously.

This is not to deny the importance of political changes (in *strictu sensu*) which were visible from the start of the new regime. The first years (in particular, between 1926-1930) were characterised by contradictory educational policies, while the power struggle was going on between fractions of the conservative republicans and the radical nationalists as well as unsuccessful political revolts from sectors of radical republicans and socialists. The year of 1930 marks the first clarification of the regime, at least at the level of educational policies. In 1933, with the new political Constitution, the 'Estado Novo' emerged with defined contours, as mentioned in chapter 5.

It is in the continuing political instability of the Military Dictatorship, finally giving place to the 'Estado Novo', that I will be examining the changes implemented for the 'nationalisation of education'. One of the first measures of the Military Dictatorship was to end the regime of co-education in primary schools and such

policies will be examined in some detail. Why did gender relations assume such importance in this period of political instability? What relationship was established between the separation of the sexes and the 'nationalisation of education'? What were the implications for primary teaching? Were there attempts on the part of the State to regulate who taught who according to strict gender divisions? Was the separation of sexes - which Nóvoa (1992) describes as a logic of 'compartmentalisation' - a kind of political rhetoric inevitably colluding with the 'pragmatism' of reducing public expenses at a minimum possible?

It is these questions and others in terms of mass schooling and the strengthening/weakening of the relations between its development and the 'feminisation' of teaching that I will discuss next.

Contradictory Measures and Ideological Consolidation in Education

The 28 May 1926 military coup did not seem to generate strong resistance from Portuguese working class organisations, such as the trade unions and working class political parties. The constant military threats and instability, with their consequent tensions and alerts within the unionist organisations had probably contributed to some notion that the new military coup was similar to the previous ones. Among primary teachers, there are also indications that there was almost an indifference towards the new military coup (Mónica 1977:183). Further, at least fractions among them, "deposited a certain hope in the military coup of 28 May 1926" (Adão 1984:61) in the expectation that it could resolve various problems of the primary teaching occupation.

If it did not become immediately evident that something quite radical had changed for the union movement, it was clear from the first months that the State envisaged to exert greater regulation of all school areas where ideology played a central role. In the perspective of Monica,

> (...) all educational policy of the former regime was severely criticised for not having inculcated the masses with the necessary nationalist sentiments by virtue of its exaggerated rationalism, positivism and defence of the religious neutrality of schools (1975:484).

In fact, as will be seen below, there was from the start, although with fluctuations, an orientation from governmental agencies towards transmitting what was considered by the new order to be the central values of the nation. Mónica underlines that "the primary school played a dual role - that of trying to erase original cultural loyalties and offering a new official ideology" (1978:38). Another area of clear change on the part of the State was the area of the education of both sexes: co-education was extinguished. Concerning religious education, however, things were not so clear cut: catholic teaching was re-established soon after the military coup in private schools but, it seems that it was not until 1936, that there was a clear definition of catholic education in state primary schools.

Undoubtedly, the new orientation of the State involved a conflictual process between some political groups. Indeed, some of the trends that later characterised the policies of the 'Estado Novo' were already visible in education but political struggles and resistance also found their expression in the wider social formation as a sign of the intense power struggle that was taking place. Stoer and I have argued elsewhere that:

> The effects on education were (...) contradictory in themselves. Mónica's argument that the consolidation of mass primary schooling in Portugal resulted as a reaction against modernity appears valid, but not as some uninterrupted process starting on May 28, 1926. (It did not, therefore, result as a phenomenon aimed at the expansion of schooling primarily to serve the industrial needs of the country, either in terms of qualifications needed or in terms of the proper attitudes and perspectives towards work required, nor much less, for the purpose of democratising the educational system by allowing the entry of the popular masses into it) (Stoer & Araújo 1987:133).

The conflictual character of the developments in education can be illustrated by the debate that occurred around the 'escola única' (single school for all). It was a polemic over its "advantages, limitations and dangers (...). The debate was crucial as much for situationists as for republicans because it raised fundamental questions of equality and democracy" (Mónica 1978:133). An account of the different positions of the 'salazaristas' (the situationists), the republicans and the anarchists ('anarco-sindicalistas') involved in the debate is provided by Mónica (1980).

Republicans defended the comprehensive school, aiming for universal, free and secular schooling. Upward social mobility was to be attained by the working classes through their school attendance, according to their abilities. Moreover, social harmony was to emerge via the convergence of all social groups in the same type of schools.

Anarchists, expressing their views in their newspaper *A Batalha* (to which I have refered in chapter 5), claimed that, within capitalism, equality in education could not be attained. Power relations were seen to determine the distribution of knowledge. Further it was "a shameless lie" to claim that the political equality of all within the State was the basis for the access to powerful

social positions. As Mónica stresses (1980:512), they had less illusions than the Republicans about the comprehensive school.

The situationists stressed that the comprehensive school ('escola única') was a disguise that the radicals were using to defend secular schools. In a well known article published in a right- wing newspaper, Marcelo Caetano[1] stressed that to enforce this type of school was to commit a crime, since it was against the "sacred rights of the family" taking away its authority to educate its own children. He argued that the 'escola única' was an attempt to imitate the bolshevist model of education. The comprehensive school was also considered a myth with its belief that equality could supersede unequal innate abilities. In his view, the right to occupy the higher social positions was the result of a long process of reflection and specific training which were not characteristic of the working classes. The clever son of a working class family could be naturally an efficient worker in the craft inherited from his father, he could even make it to the top of his manual occupation. However, if through schooling, he had access to higher social positions he would be a "mediocre" professional and would become an unhappy man. Mónica underlines that the author of the article "attempted to abolish the dangerous principle of the hazardous distribution of intelligence and the idea that the school could democratise society" (Mónica 1980:514). It is also here relevant to stress something that gender studies have been emphasising for several years which is that many discourses on education, although appearing at first sight to be talking about schooling for everyone,

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1 M. Caetano was the sucessor of Salazar in the late 1960s. His intervention appeared in *A Voz*, 24-26 Jan 1928, quoted by Mónica 1980:514, and Cortezão1988:203-5.

have mainly in mind a male pupil. This is also quite clear in the quotations just mentioned by Caetano.

The year 1930 signalled a clarification of education policy, for, as Salazar concluded in one of his speeches (celebrating the coup of 28 May 1926), the political question would only be resolved

> (...) by way of educational measures to modify the main defects of our education, to substitute the present disorganisation with organisation and to integrate the Nation, all of the Nation, in the State, by way of a new constitutional law (Cruz 1986:94).

From 1930 onwards, the ideological nature attributed to State education became the object of more legislation. This was from then onwards an easier task since the political instability of the first period of the Military Dictatorship had given way to more stable forms of political organisation: the State was struggling to achieve more hegemonic forms, as seen in chapter 5. I will be mentioning and analysing below educational policies which aimed clearly to change schooling according to nationalism, order, hierarchy and obedience.

At this point it is useful to present a systematic review of the legislative activity of the State in education, concentrating on the periods 1926-1930 and 1930-1933, in the following areas: the curricular organisation of primary education, teacher education and also the construction of a more elitist lyceum. Vocational (technical) schooling was not specially regulated by the governments which came after the military coup of 1926, at least until 1930. For that reason it will not be included in this review.

- **political fluctuations in education - the period 1926-1930**

In June 1926, the primary school started to travel along a path that would lead to its eventual impoverishment, especially for the working classes. Schooling was reduced in its extension. In 1927, compulsory schooling was reduced from five to four years. Some time before, in 1926, the 'higher primary' schools were abolished and substituted, in the following year, by 'complementary primary' schools. As a result, this kind of schooling was reduced from three to two years.

A major criterion for the implementation of the new 'complementary' primary sector was "the need to avoid overloading the lyceum with an excessive number of students"[2]. In contrast to the beginning of the 1920s, the aim here was neither to reduce esoteric knowledge nor to expand schooling, endowing it with a meritocratic dynamic, nor even to make it more responsive to the needs of industry. The "need to avoid overloading the lyceum with an excessive number of students" was justified, in the Military Dictatorship, on the basis of the need for schools to assign social groups to pre-defined roles in the social relations of production through distinct institutions. What was necessary was

> (...) to provide minimal knowledge for the children of the popular classes, of the more humble social groups (...) to teach what is essential and general, without pushing children's minds to subtle scientific cogitations and to the most accurate demonstrations[3].

The new curricular organisation of primary education, retained some elements of republican education, such as a "non-bookish schooling", "non-encyclopaedic", "utilitarian" knowledge

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2 *Decree* nº 14.417, 12 October 1927.

3 *Decree* nº 14 417, 12 Oct 1927. Primary school curriculum was clearly reduced in the number of subject matters to be taught, cf. *Portaria* nº 5060, 21 Oct 1927.

and the use of the "lição das coisas" ("lesson of things", i.e. using concrete examples taken from nature). However, at the same time, the new curriculum curtailed the extension and scope of the primary school syllabus proposed "for the children of the more humble social groups".

While some elements of republican education were maintained, civic education was transformed into 'nationalist education', such that through a succession of historical (male) heroes the ideological parameters of the 'Estado Novo' could be securely cemented. One example was the school subject entitled 'Choreography of Portugal and the Colonies, History of Portugal and Civic Education' which assembled a curriculum justified in the light of

> (...) the fact that history gives itself better than any other discipline to the cultivation of real patriotism, to the production of excellent moral lessons and to the development of civic spirit[4].

Various well-known figures such as Viriato, Gonçalo da Maia, the Count of Avranches, etc. were included to inculcate attitudes of "defense of the homeland" and "loyalty and honour". In 1928, in the reorganisation of elementary primary education, 'Moral and Civic Education' defined as one of its objectives:

> (...) to discipline consciences, to create character (...) one of the most noble tasks of primary schooling (...), to instill traits of cleanliness, order, punctuality, delicacy[5].

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[4] *Decree* nº 14 417, 12 Oct 1927.

[5] *Decree* nº16.077, 26 Oct 1928. The Minister of 'Instruction' was Duarte Pacheco. Although the number of subject matters were increased in this reform, in comparison with the former one, the introduction to the decree stressed that: "To extend the knowledge to be taught in the primary school may appear as an attractive aim, but for us this is a deplorable imperfection. (...) To make things small but well made - this is our saying".

It aimed to base itself on love for the family and school, on the acceptance/repudiation of the "virtues"/"capital sins" of Catholic catechism, on the "cult of the national flag" and on the "material and moral values of our colonies".

Finally, part of this 'nationalist education' included the specific training of girls, to inspire them to conduct their lives according to the utility of service to others, namely their husbands and children. It was stressed that:

> (...) today, more than ever, it has become imperative that the school guide the domestic education of the woman so that she may understand her social role.

This role was clearly defined through the enumeration of tasks that girls should learn within schools. The syllabus of 'home economics' included "cooking, washing, keeping the household clean, cutting garments, sewing and conserving the garments of the family, and also (...) [to instill] the value of hygienics (...) [since] clealiness is the elegance of the poor". The aim was the construction of the model home within which the woman should provide "a climate of comfort, tranquility and well-being"[6]. Precise directions concerning the number of pieces of furniture, their arrangement and the correct atmosphere of the home were offered in the syllabus: "The bedroom should include few pieces of furniture (...), the dining room should be happy and inviting (...) with some flowers to add joy". Sumptuousness should not be the aim, but, rather, "a harmony of the forms", since "(...) it is in the dining room that one receives one's friends who should find the hours spent there agreeable and, seemingly, quickly over[7].

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6 *Portaria* nº 5060, 21 Oct.1927.

7 *Decree* nº 16.077, 26 Oct 1928.

As these quotations reveal, educational policy-makers at the time appear to have had no knowledge whatsoever about working class and peasant cultures or ways of living. Further they were manifestly involved in a project of class reproduction through primary schooling. As a result, the ideological model of the urban lower middle classes was transmitted through the school curriculum to the children of working class and peasant families.

Policies with regard to teacher education constitute the second area of this analysis. They are also an example of the 'fluctuations' in educational policies given the political instability of Portuguese society at the time. Under the direction of Duarte Pacheco, as Minister of 'Instruction', these policies were not meant to be guided by financial considerations. In contrast with the policies of the previous government - which shut down various faculties and teacher colleges[8] - the new government[9] restored these schools, arguing that it was necessary "not to damage the national culture (by financial cuts that should be made) in less important services" since there was an illiteracy rate of over 50% and an insufficient number of schools and of teachers trained by efficient colleges[10]. The new reorganisation of primary teacher education enlarged it to four years (previously three years) stressing that the aim was to attain a more solid professional education of primary teachers ("an introduction to the sciences of education") as well as a "deeper general culture"[11]. It is useful to note the kind of language used in this legal diploma. Quite

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[8] *Decree* nº 15.365, 14 April 1928.

[9] This government was headed by Vicente de Freitas having as its Finance Minister the future dictator Salazar.

[10] *Decree* nº 15.886, 24 Aug 1928.

[11] *Decree* nº 16.037, 15 Oct 1928.

unexpectedly, there were many references to the republican heritage (sometime later, instead of the Republic, legal documents refer to the "efforts of the National Dictatorship"). Moreover, it was hoped that the reorganisation would "contribute, indirectly, to *a major development of the education of the working classes, so useful in a democracy*" (emphasis added). Appeals were made to teachers for their effective cooperation with the Reform, in order "to provide the children of the people with primary teachers who are true educators". Further, the legal document also claimed its acceptance of the "principles of the *1911 Education Reform Act* " - that is to say, of the 'purity' of republican ideals. Finally, republican efforts towards pre-school education were also praised: "they have shown their worth through the exemplary schools existing in Oporto and Lisbon, (efforts) which need to be continued". The fluctuation of policies in this area appears to be related to the resistance that the governments after 28 May 1926 encountered when trying to enforce a new orientation to teacher education institutions (cf. Nóvoa 1992).

The third area to be analysed is the lyceum sector. It was a sector where, apparently, there were no conflictual perspectives but a consensus about the important role of the lyceum in the 'new order'. Soon after 1926, the sector was given a new legal statute[12]. Further, a number of legal regulations were drawn up in a coherent way as part of a plan to expand qualitatively the lyceum sector[13]. Under the orientation of the Minister of 'Instruction', Duarte

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12 *Decree* nº 12.425, 16 Oct 1926.

13 In fact the aim was not to increase the number of pupils in the lyceum sector. Instead greater selection of pupils was intended "depending on their abilities to attend secondary schooling" (*Decree* nº 15.941, 21 Sept 1928).

Pacheco, official documents stressed that it was there that the "future political leaders of the country should be educated". At the same time, educational measures were framed with meritocratic concerns. School fees increased eleven fold[14]. The Ministry stressed that the intention was not to restrict lyceum attendance to rich people. Instead, the aim was to compel people to pay whenever they could afford to. Therefore in each lyceum scholarships were available for ten to fifteen per cent of pupils from "poor groups", because "quite often it is among people without means that pupils with the best abilities can be found" for political and social leadership[15]. Clearly, these last measures contradicted the perspectives of the 'situationists' mentioned before (for instance, Marcelo Caetano), that the education for the "brighter working class sons" should be restricted to manual occupations. Although the contradictions of the meritocratic discourse become quite visible in this context - 85% of the students with "the highest abilities" were to come from wealthy social classes - the fact that these concerns were expressed at all reveals the unstable and conflicting political and social conditions of the first period of the Military Dictatorship in which these policies were advanced. Other measures taken demonstrate the importance that education politicians attributed, at this moment, to the role of teachers, the reduction of teacher/pupil ratios and the restriction of school enrolments in each lyceum in order to obtain better results from its attendance[16]. In addition, education politicians approved a large budget for the construction and repair of buildings and for buying

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14 *Decree* nº 15.941, 21 Sept 1928.

15 *Decree* nº 16.016, 10 Oct 1928.

16 *Decree* nº 15.942 and *decree* nº 15.971, both of 11 Sept 1928.

school materials, in contrast with the strict cuts in the primary school budget.

- **the ideological consolidation of education - the period 1930-1933**

From 1930 onwards, in particular, the State became increasingly active in education trying to regulate all areas affecting its political orientation. It aimed to enforce those elements already present in republican education which, although not playing a central role, were consistent with its own policy (such as ideas on nationalism and colonialism)[17]. State activity was concentrated in three main areas. Firstly, it aimed to reduce teachers' power in education and, in particular, the control they were able to retain over the educative process. Secondly, it redirected education in terms of the enforcement of nationalist and authoritarian values ('God, Fatherland and Family') and, at the same time, it restricted forms of education seen as "superfluous", "too costly" or "unnecessary". Thirdly, it provided certified channels of access of elites to positions of power, while undermining social mobility in general (see Stoer & Araújo 1987:133).

With regard to the first area, legal documents concentrated on reducing teachers' salaries as well as increasing

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[17] One should stress that some elements that came to be known as 'salazarist ideology' were already present in republican policies in education in a fragmentary way. Among them, a paramilitary education for boys over fourteen years of age, attending either state or private schools, to be supervised by army officials (*decree* nº 11.294, 9 Jan 1926). Another example refers to the consolidation of certain forms of nationalism already supported by specific republican sectors. For instance, in an official document where the intention was the commemoration of the 9th April, the day Portugal entered World War I, it was stated that there was "a civic imperative to glorify the effort of the Portuguese race (...), the great educative lesson in terms of creating in the minds of the new generation the worship of sacrifice for the Fatherland" (*Portaria* nº 3971, 31 March 1924).

the difference between the salaries of the various categories of teachers (cf. Nóvoa 1987:646-7). Censorship was introduced not only in teacher journals and publications but also in programmes for academic conferences. There were legal powers determining who should have the right to teach, leading to a degradation of the level of professional skills legally required. Teachers were prohibited from discussing the work of their superiors in the education hierarchy. Finally, teachers, like all other State employees, were banned from any participation in associations in 1933[18].

With regard to the second area, school curricula were restricted both in their length and content. Compulsory schooling was further restricted to three years[19]. In 1930, 'postos escolares' (school posts) were established in "far away villages" which should be only concerned with the teaching of reading and writing. The legal document stated that, in these villages, it was unthinkable to create a proper school. It also stressed that this legislation was "one more initiative by the dictatorship for the resolution of the so-called problem of illiteracy"[20]. In 1932, complementary primary schooling was extinguished[21].

Teacher education was also reduced: many subjects disappeared and were not replaced. To become a qualified primary teacher it was only necessary to have completed primary schooling and attended a two year course in a Teacher Education College ('Escola do Magistério Primário'). The length of the course therefore

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18 *Decree* nº 23.048, art. 39, 23 Sept 1933.

19 *Decree* nº 18.140, 28 Mar 1930.

20 *Decree* nº 20.604, 9 Dec 1930. The timetable during the day was of three hours duration, between 1 November and 31 May. At night, 'postos escolares' were open for two hours, between 1 November and 31 March.

21 *Decree* nº 21.712, 7 Oct 1932.

was reduced to two years (from four) with the aim of "simplifying, standardising, reducing each institution to a rigorously defined function"[22].

Besides the strong curricular reduction to 'reading and writing' in "postos escolares", and to 'reading, writing and counting' and little else in other schools, there was, in this last period, a clear reinforcement of the role of ideology in terms of strict morality, patriotism, and patriarchy. Decrees containing sentences to be inserted in school books were published. Their aim was to provide "(...) teaching of a moral and patriotic order, in short sentences, easy to understand and retain"[23]. In primary schools, it was, in particular, the value of obedience[24], within a rigid patriarchal hierarchy (the father, the schoolmaster, the Prime Minister) which was inculcated.

The third main area of education policy considered was the lyceum. The Ministry of Public 'Instruction' continued preoccupied with the lyceum, in order to consolidate a sector of schooling destined to provide elites. In fact, one diploma demonstrated this concern by emphasising that, of all the branches of schooling which the dictatorship had tried to improve

> (...) none has received more attention than the lyceum school sector. This is as it should be. Secondary schooling by its very nature, is essentially concerned with character formation, and as a result of the place it occupies in the organisation of our public 'instruction' - linked to higher education, and consequently, to the socially most important professions - it is

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22 *Decree* nº 18.646, 7 Aug 1930. The following subjects were banned from teacher education with this decree: Portuguese, French, General History, National History, General Geography, Coreography of Portugal and Colonies, Mathematics, Cosmography, Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany, Mineralogy, Geology, History of Education, School Legislation, General Hygienics, and School Hygienics.

23 *Decree* nº 21.014, 21 March 1932.

24 In a total of 18 sentences, almost half spoke of obedience. "To command is not the same as to enslave.The more obedience one finds, the sweeter will be the command".

> without doubt, in our country, the touchstone of our state of civilisation[25].

Included in this attention to secondary schooling was an attempt at greater effectiveness in the political and ideological control of what took place both inside and outside the classroom. This went as far as daily control over attendance registers and careful monitoring of teachers' class records.[26] Additionally, contacts were encouraged between pupils in schools on the mainland and those in the colonies, through 'school correspondence' (a proposal from 'New Education') in order to reaffirm the importance of the colonial empire. This was to be carried out under the vigilance of lyceum rectors[27]. School publications were also censored, "prudently, by rectors", in order to avoid "all deviations in which such publications frequently lose themselves", such as in the debate of political or religious questions (often in a "non respectful way"), or even critical remarks about school authority[28].

The secondary (lyceum) school syllabus was remodelled along the lines of the 'nationalisation of education' perspective. In 1930, 'Moral and Civic Instruction' was introduced, and in this subject, as well as in others, the need "to develop national sentiment and the moral education of the student" was emphasised[29]. Pupils were to be taught stories of war heroes plus other stories related to "modern scholars and heroes", framed by the values better summed up by the triad "God, Fatherland and Family". However, this ideological education was not restricted only to this subject, since for instance subjects, such as

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[25] *Decree* 20.741, 11 Jan 1932 (Secondary Schooling Statuse)
[26] *Decree* nº 18.827, 6 Sept 1930.
[27] *Circular* DGI (68), 24 Mar. 1933.
[28] *Decree* nº 22.347, 23 Mar. 1932.
[29] *Decree* nº 18.779, 26 Aug 1930.

Portuguese, needed to contribute to the "development of the national sentiment and to the moral education of pupils"[30]. In 1932, with the reinforcement of the discipline 'History of the Fatherland', the need to avoid "defeatist" and "negative" history (taught in the past, under the republican regime, as it was argued in the official document) was underlined. It was the duty of the State to define "the national truth - that is, the truth of the Nation", thus allowing students

> (...) to learn that Portugal is the most beautiful, the most noble and the most valliant of countries, that the Portuguese should hold no other sentiment than that of Portugal above all else.

More than 'nationalising education', the aim was to inculcate values which the Military Dictatorship considered central:

> The Family, as the essential social unit; Faith, as the promotor of Portuguese expansion to other seas and continents and as the element of national solidarity; the Principle of Authority, as the indispensable element of general progress; Firmness of Government as the backbone of the political life of our Country; Respect for Hierarchy, as the basic condition for the consensus of values[31].

The clarification of the changes implemented in educational policy at other levels of the education system besides mass schooling may help to understand the drastic changes introduced into mass schooling. These were not so much in terms of either the expansion (or contraction) of the school network or of school rolls but in terms of *what counted as education.* In fact, there was a political opposition to formal education being seen as either a vehicle for social mobility, or, worse still, as fostering some form of critical awareness. Social control through education

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30 *Decree* nº 18.885, 27 Sept 1930.

31 *Decree* nº 21.103, 15 April 1932.

was stated without much disguise. What were the effects on the development of mass schooling?

The Construction of Mass Schooling 1926-1933

Some of the topics on the construction of mass schooling in the period 1926-1933 have already been discussed in the previous section, when attempting to trace the framework of educational policy after the military coup of 1926. The reduction in length and content of mass schooling combined with a greater ideological control were evident right from the start of the new regime. Clearly, the *mandate* for mass schooling changed as it ceased to be oriented towards the production of a closer relationship between education and the economy as it was in the republican period 1919-1926. Instead, mass schooling appears to be directed, from then onwards, to cooling the expectations of social mobility, inherited from the republican regime. The political discourse on mass schooling became increasingly pragmatic: as resources for education were scarce, the State reduced mass schooling in length. It also aimed at expanding school enrolments and at becoming, in general, more efficient and less ambitious in the expansion of mass schooling than the former regime. A reading of the official documents shows that mass schooling became increasingly impoverished in terms of its quality, while the lyceum sector was granted the attention and the resources necessary for its expansion.

Mónica (1977) has already discussed this apparent dilemma: a political regime which mistrusted education in a more expanded and critical form and preached a kind of 'return to basics',

increased at the same time the number of school rolls and was able to grant mass schooling greater visibility. It was also able to further reduce the rate of illiteracy. In her perspective, mass schooling expanded with the authoritarian regime not because the regime had special concerns for the education of the working classes for themselves, but mainly because mass schooling constituted a powerful form of political and cultural control of the children of the more rebellious social groups:

> Even accepting that dominant social groups in our country were more confident in using force than consensus as a basis for social order, they were aware that a stable society would never be attained without at least an appearance of legitimacy. Although underestimated, Salazar never forgot that consensus could not be dispensed with. The school was clearly a crucial instrument, either in the socialisation of 'uncivilised' children, or in the inculcation of a 'clear consciousness of the dignity of a nationalist people' (Mónica 1977:40).

Sérgio Grácio (1986) stresses in particular that mass schooling was curtailed in its number of compulsory years to provide the possibility of extending the school network in a more effective way and containing costs. Economic factors however do not provide, in his view, a full answer to the question of how and why mass schooling was redirected in specific ways by the authoritarian order from 1926 onwards. According to the politicians, who were to succeed in power after that year, formal education was seen as increasing social aspirations and this was excessive and obnoxious. Grácio quotes the Minister of 'Instruction', Eusébio Tamagnini, saying in 1928:

> It is necessary to put an end to this legal superproduction of intellectual forces because this is a factor of social *déclassement*, and it originates this crowd of semiproletarians: some come from the working classes and will never be transformed into the bourgeoisie; others come from higher conditions and will not become resigned to the situation of simple workers; they are prone to revolt. It is necessary to moderate the unsound aspirations which fill the minds of the poor and

> indigent. It is necessary to destroy this great illusion that culture gives wealth and power with infalibility (quoted in Grácio 1986:33)

António Nóvoa (1992) defends a similar perspective, underlining that mass schooling was developed under a 'minimalist logic' which meant that it was conveyed to the whole of the population in a way that would not arouse new social expectations and would reduce the prospect of using educational capital as a factor of social mobility (1992:20).

From what these authors stress, it is clear that, not only ideological inculcation, but also the cooling of social expectations, at the level of intentions and practices, were already present in the period 1926-1933. In the first post-republican years, this was more problematic, given that the memories and the experiences of the republican regime were very much alive and the political organisations maintained some of their networks intact. But after 1930, the two orientations just mentioned (i.e ideological inculcation and the cooling of social expectations), as a result of political clarification, started to exert their influence on educational policies.

Nóvoa (1992) enumerates four strategies used by the State in its intervention against the republican heritage. Firstly, a strategy of compartmentalisation of schooling which put an end to the regime of co-education, instead separating boys from girls, and defining different social channels throughout their schooling. Secondly, a logic of "pragmatic realism" mentioned above. Thirdly, the imposition of a centralised and authoritarian administration of the education system, reinforced by mechanisms of inspection and closer control of teachers. Fourthly, a strategy of reducing the

professional status of teachers, devaluing their professional education as well as the requirements to teach.

It is on the separation of both sexes and consequently the ending of co-education within the primary school that I want to concentrate, since the other three strategies have been mentioned in one way or another.

Soon after the military coup, the first attempts were made to put an end to co-education. But it was only in 1927, that a decree was able to alter this regime: from then onwards boys and girls were to be taught separately[32]. This was to be implemented "gradually in order not to disturb the proper functioning of schooling or increase the education budget". Some months later, a letter was issued to inspectors clarifying what constituted a 'school': "the same and only entrance, space for recreation, lavatory and other hygienic installations". The same building could constitute two schools whenever the two sexes were offered complete separation. When it was not possible either to divide the same building into two schools or to have two buildings, mixed schools continued to exist until the opportunity arose of a new building. The new regulations stressed that mixed schools could continue to exist due to restrictions of space and lack of teachers. Further, children of both sexes with learning difficulties could be taught together (or even boys with learning difficulties and girls with normal achievement)[33]. The separation of sexes in primary education implied the emphasis on the "domestic education of the woman, nowadays more important than ever, in order that she

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32 *Decree* nº 13.619, 18 May 1927, art. 3. One month later, this decree was annulled, but it was substituted by another - *decree* nº 13.791, 16 June 1927 - where the separation of sexes was reaffirmed (art.3).

33 "Aos Srs. Inspectores dos círculos escolares", 24 Sept. 1927.

understands very clearly her social role"[34]. Girls should be taught needlework and embroidery[35].

The regime of separation of sexes was again reaffirmed some months later[36], probably because either there was more resistance than expected or the rhythm was considered rather slow. In this decree, the implementation of the separation of the sexes was justified on the basis of the complaints against co-education from parents and also from critical remarks appearing in newspapers. Although Adão (1984) could not find any special remarks, except in a conservative newspaper close to the new regime (*Novidades*), the conservative educational journals, such as *Educação Nacional*, called co-education a "black spot polluting the life of the school". In contrast, various sectors spoke in defense of co-education such as the inspectorate in reports produced in August and September 1927. Organised teachers gave their support to it in the meetings that they were still allowed to organise, as well as women's groups who wrote to the Ministry of 'Instruction' (*Conselho Nacional das Mulheres Portuguesas*). These perspectives will be further analysed in chapter 8.

Although the new education policies regarding single sex schools were announced, paradoxically mixed schools still continued to be created in greater numbers than single sex schools as further decrees of 1930 demonstrate[37]. In a new decree in 1931, it was stated again that "it was necessary to promote the best possible economy in primary schools" which meant, among other

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34 *Portaria* nº 5060, 18 Oct 1927.

35 *Decree* nº 14.463, 7 Oct 1927.

36 *Decree* nº 15.032, 15 Feb. 1928.

37 Eighty two mixed schools, 5 girls' and 7 boys' schools were created in 1930 - *decree* 18.938, 8 Dec. 1930.

things, to increase the pupil/ teacher ratio - each primary teacher was to be in charge of 45 pupils. Mixed schools should continue to exist when the number of pupils of both sexes did not justify the employment of two teachers[38].

At this stage, clear tensions existed between the pressure to reduce the economic costs of primary schooling which implied the extension of the number of mixed schools in small villages, and the rhetoric of separateness of sexes attempting to gain ground. Although censorship was already imposed, we can still find a debate around the education of the sexes, questioning the new orthodoxy of separateness. From interventions in teachers' journals, and even from legal documents, it is quite clear that this was a contested terrain. In fact, there was a conflictuality around gender roles and around the whole issue of co-education which needs to be uncovered. I will be pursuing it in chapter 8.

Focusing now on the actual expansion of primary schools between 1926 and 1933, it is pretty clear that, in 1932, mixed schools represented more than one third of the total number of primary schools, as shown in the following table:

table 1
Number of Primary Schools
1926-1933

years	Boys Schools	Girls Schools	Mixed Schools	T.Number Sch
1926-27	-	-	-	6648
1928-29	-	-	-	7005
1930-31	-	-	-	7477
1932-33	2330	2292	2768	7390

Source: *Anuário Estatístico*, 1927, 1930, 1932, 1935.

38 Decree nº 20181, 24 Jul. 1931.

As already stressed, the years 1926-1933 were years of political instability, almost as great as the republican years. The average annual rate of growth of the school network, in the period 1927-1931, was about 3% but in subsequent years, between 1931-33, it fell to a negative growth (around - 0.6).[39] The same process was occurring in school enrolments:

table 2
Number of School Enrolments
1926/1933

years	Tot N Sch. Rolls	% Girls'rolls
1926-27	318.437	40.2
1928-29	340.622	41.3
1930-31	422.624	42.7
1932-33	420.499	43.0

Source: *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal, 1926, 1929, 1931, 1933*

In the period 1927-31, the average annual rate of growth of school enrolments was about 7% (around 9% for girls' enrolments), but was negative in the period 1931-33 (around -0.3). However, if the figures on school enrolments for instance in 1930 are compared with school enrolments ten years before, the picture that emerges is of an increasing number of children in schools: 30% in 1920, 37.7% in 1930 (Nóvoa 1987:575). Despite the irregular development over relatively short periods of time, mass schooling was becoming more widespread. It is also noticeable that girls'

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table 2a
average annual rate of growth
of numbers of school and pupils'rolls
1926-1933
%

	N.Schools	Pupils' rolls
1927-31	2.9	7.3
1931-33	-0.6	-0.3

enrolments, representing 40% of the total number of school rolls, continued to increase throughout this period, although in a limited way. It is, however, worth making the point here that the period of the Military Dictatorship (1926-1933) does not appear to show the trend of a *sustained* development of mass schooling which Mónica (1977) identified for the period 1926-1940. The period 1926-33 was too short and unstable to have produced sustained effects in mass schooling in terms of school attendance.

Thus, in terms of mass schooling, improvement in pupil attendance and the school network, there was not much difference between the period of the Military Dictatorship and the republican period. What changed in this period was the overall purpose of education, i.e. using once more Dale & Ozga's concept, its *mandate,* and the conditions for its provision. Education during the period 1926-1933 appeared to aim at introducing order into pupils' minds, and at channelling them into pre-established social class and gender positions in society.

What were the implications of this change in educational policy for the 'feminisation' of teaching? How far did the principle of the sexes being educated separately in primary school affect the division of labour between male and female teachers?

The 'Feminisation' of Teaching 1926-1933

One set of questions that needs to be asked in relation to the 'feminisation' of teaching in the Military Dictatorship concerns whether there was a distinct policy to carry over from the former period. Did the State still attempt to frame the growth of women teachers in the occupation within specific limits, as in the

republican period? Did the State contribute to increase their numbers as they were perceived as 'docile' and 'cheap' workers to fulfill the policies of the authoritarian regime? Did the growth of women teachers in primary teaching attain some autonomy from State policies, in the sense that it continued the dynamic it had obtained during the republican years as *women's work*?

Filomena Mónica (1977) refers, indirectly, to the relationship between the changing role of teachers from one period to the other and gender relations. She emphasises the "functionality" of women teachers for the authoritarian regime (with particular emphasis on the role of "regentes escolares"[40]). She questions the feelings of the "70% silent majority of women" in elementary teaching in the context of an increasing loss of prestige by teachers, chiefly after 1933. Mónica accounts for women teachers' 'passiveness' and 'adaptation' to the social, political and cultural conditions through reference to their social origins. They came from the poor peasantry which meant, in Mónica's view, their dependence on local patronage. In spite of being professionals, their status depended on their husbands' status, "probably the local pharmacist, a tradesman or a civil servant". It was their social origin that explained female conservatism in teaching. And she concludes that: "(...) being gentle, cheap and conservative, women had the ideal qualifications to teach the children of the poor" (1977: 209).

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[40] As mentioned earlier, 'school posts' were created after 1930, and the conditions to be employed there were to have completed primary school and to be a morally and politically 'adequate person'. They were not called teachers, but 'regentes escolares' (the person who substitutes the teacher, a 'regent'). Their salary was lower than the salary paid to primary teachers. Statistical data shows that women filled these 'school posts'.

Mónica connects the loss of the teacher's role as a "opinion leader in rural communities" (a role which was underlined in republican state policies and pedagogical discourse) with the increased recruitment of women which "had never been so high as during the period 1930-1950" (1977:200). In this way, she establishes a cause and effect relation between loss in status and the higher number of women in primary teaching.

There are a number of problems with Mónica's perspective in this matter. Firstly, it is far from clear that the social origin of teachers was low, at least with regard to the period 1918-1936. As Nóvoa's findings confirm, more than 2/3 of the teachers came from 'intermediate' social groups (i.e. those working in such occupations as tradesmen, skilled workers, civil servants, teachers, the professions). Only a small percentage came from the poor rural classes (4.9% of rural workers, cf. Nóvoa 1987: 602-3).

Secondly, looking closer at the data presented by Mónica, it is worth reflecting upon the fact that the percentage of women teachers only rose by 6% in the period she studied (1926-1940) - less than during the republican period, when this percentage was approximately 14%. Therefore, the assumption that their numbers increased mainly during the 'Estado Novo', because women were functional to the needs of the conservative State, looks fragile. Actually, the increase in the percentage of women teachers was higher during the republican regime.

Thirdly, women teachers are perceived, in Mónica's analysis, either in terms of their presumed social class origin in the poor peasantry, or with regard to their situation of dependency to men (either a husband or a benefactor). Both situations are more assumed than theorised. In particular, there is missing a theory of

gender relations where the situation of women's dependency could be explained. In its absence, we are left with unexamined assumptions of women's 'passiveness' which contribute to reproduce traditional and untheorised perspectives on gender relations within the Social Sciences. We need a theory of gender production showing how gender divisions are built up by ideologies about female and male roles, historically supported by the context of specific material conditions as Michèle Barrett proposes (1980). She stresses that much work on gender production and ideologies is descriptive when confronted with the question "what images of women are protrayed?", rather being integrated in a theoretically articulated perspective (1980:100). This leads us to analyse the effectiveness of ideologies (such as domesticity) not as a direct, compulsive and uniform reception by social groups with different cultures and different pathways, but as "an indication of the bounds within which particular feelings are constructed and negotiated in a given social formation" (Barrett 1980:107).

The emphasis on the domestic and motherly role of women, which can be seen in the period of transition and, in particular, in the "Estado Novo" and the criticisms directed against women's work outside the home (as will be seen in chapter 8) were not enough to block the growing search for teaching by women (many of them were married). However, as it has often been noted, the "Estado Novo" regulated women teachers in particular, forbidding them to become school headmistresses in boys' schools[41], prescribing the

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41 *Decree* nº 22 369, 30 March 1933, cit. in Adão 1984:159.

way they should dress and behave in society, even to the point of indicating the kind of husband they should have[42].

If Filomena Mónica's work provides us with an analysis of how the "Estado Novo" was structured around the family, such an analysis is not related to the performance of women teachers in Salazar's society. The political and ideological conditions involved in gender categories of that period are not discussed with reference to the 'feminisation' of teaching. There is no comparison between the ways of constructing the patriarchal family during the Republic period and during the "Estado Novo". The continuity of patriarchal structures in Portuguese society between the two periods is ignored, as well as the exclusive responsibility of women for everything that concerned household/domestic activities[43] .

It is probably because there is no analysis that considers the existence of patriarchal relations (within the 'householdplace', the 'citizenplace' and the 'workplace') that the 'functionality' of women teachers in the 'Estado Novo' and their 'disfunctionality' in the republican regime are projected by Mónica. In the next chapter, when discussing women's roles in both historical and political periods, the 'functionality' vs 'disfunctionality' of women will be addressed and problematised. I will argue that the roots of these perspectives maintain firm connections with unproblematised perspectives within political theory and common sense views and distort the understanding of women's work situation.

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42 *Decree* 27.279, 24 November 1936, quoted in Santos & Roque 1939:89). See chapter 8 on this question.

43 Maria Belo *et al* (1987:264) stress that the 'Estado Novo' "made women at the time exceptionally visible both socially and politically". This was due to a restricted right to vote granted to them in 1931 and due to the fact that three women were invited to join the national (corporativist) assemblies ('Assembleia Nacional' and 'Câmara Corporativa').

At this point, it is worth developing a more detailed understanding of how the 'feminisation' of teaching developed during the period 1926-1933. According to Mónica, we should expect a rapid and steady 'feminisation' of teaching facilitating the construction of a conservative State and education. However, if we concentrate upon the rhetoric of women's domesticity which the emerging order increasingly attempted to implement (particularly after 1936, with the creation of the 'Obra das Mães para a Educação Nacional'[44]) then we might hypothesise cutbacks in the 'feminisation' of teaching.

Table 3 provides us with the number of men and women teachers and the percentage of women teachers in the occupation. Women teachers continued to enter the occupation in higher numbers than their male counterparts. In the year 1931-32, women teachers already constituted 70% of the profession which meant that their numbers had continued to rise since the end of the Republic. However what is noticeable is that, between 1927-1931, the numbers of women and of men teachers were increasing at quite similar average annual rates of growth: 2.9% for women and 2.2% for men. In the year 1931-32, the number of men slightly diminished, whilst the number of women grew rapidly (an average

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44 The 'Organisation of the Mothers for National Education' was created by the 'Estado Novo' in 1936 with the aim of compelling working women to return to the domestic sphere as housekeepers, mothers and wives. Alcina M. Areia (1992) stresses that the 'Estado Novo' offered to an elite of Portuguese women a role as leaders in State educational organisations through initiatives such as this one, as well as through political activities in the National Assembly and the Corporative Chamber.

annual rate of growth of 7.7%[45]).

table 3
Number of Women and Men Primary Teachers
1926-1933[46]

	N. Men Teachers	N. Women Teachers	% WT
1926-27	2778	5619	66.8
1928-29	2691	6357	70.2
1930-31	3030	6310	67.5
1931-32	2906	6791	70.0

Source: *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal, 1926, 1929, 1931, 1933*

It is interesting to compare these figures with what was happening in teacher training colleges in the first period of the Military Dictatorship. Initially, it was clear that the majority of students were women, 87.5% in 1926-27, but this began to decline dramatically to 53% in 1932-33:

table 4
Number of Women and Men Students
in Teacher Training Colleges
1926-1933

	N. Men Students	N. Women Students	% WS
1926-27	99	694	87.5
1928-29	123	579	82.4
1930-31	418	825	66.3
1932-33	243	282	53.7

Source: *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal 1927,1929,1931,1933*

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table 3a
average annual rate of growth
of men and women teachers
1926-1933
%

	Men Teachers	Women Teachers
1927-31	2.2	2.9
1931-33	-0.4	7.6

46 In the year 1932-33, the *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal* presents no data on the number of teachers. Instead statistical officials chose to present the number of places for teachers in different types of schools (masculine, feminine, mixed). For that reason I have opted to present the data related to the previous year.

This trend in the decreasing number of women students in teacher training colleges did not continue afterwards as the data presented by Adão demonstrates (1984:16)[47]. An understanding of the conditions contributing to the cutback in the number of women students in these institutions points to the fragility of women's situation, particularly in periods of conservative change as this one. Probably, the worsening economic and social conditions brought male students back to teacher training colleges (the world crisis of 1929 had possible, though mitigated, resonances in Portugal, see Rosas 1986). More importantly, State entry regulations to teacher training colleges were changed in 1930 and 1932. Entry was made dependent on passing an exam of subjects taught in high schools[48]. This might have influenced the sudden increase in male students as the majority of high school pupils were boys. As late as 1926, boys still represented 76% of pupils in high schools, although this was less at the beginning of the Republic when they represented 89% of the high school population (see Valente 1973:103).

The increasing number of women in the teaching profession contrasts with not only the reduction of women students but also, and more sharply, the percentage of women tutors in training institutions which was much lower than their male counterparts. There is continuity in this policy from towards the end of the republican regime, and it should be understood in the context of State aims to reduce the extension and scope of teacher training colleges:

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[47] Teacher training colleges were closed in 1936, most probably to remove traces of their republican heritage (see Nóvoa 1992), and were only re-opened in 1942.

[48] *Decree* nº 21695, 19 Sept 1932.

table 5
Number of Women and Men Tutors
in Teacher Training Colleges
1926-1933

	N. Men Tutors	N. Women Tutors	% WT
1926-27	73	12	14.1
1928-29	62	12	16.2
1930-31	61	21	25.6
1932-33	19	3	13.6

Source: *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal 1927,1929,1931,1933*

In light of the data examined, it is worth questioning again the assumptions made about a functional link between the increasing numbers of women teachers and the conservative political regime of the 'Estado Novo'. If, in fact, the number of women teachers continued to increase, as table 3 demonstrates, the number of men teachers also increased, although at a lower rate. However, as the process of 'feminisation' had started well before the 28th May 1926, it is problematic, to say the least, to consider the increasing number of women teachers after that year "as a rapid and steady 'feminisation' of teaching facilitating the construction of a conservative State and education". They were there well before its onset.

As seen above, the educational rhetoric stated that it was necessary to obtain a complete separation of both sexes in schools and to have male teachers for boys and female teachers for girls. However, the conditions in which mass schooling developed were not favourable to any extensive concretisation of this aim. Thus, mixed schools were retained and even increased in numbers. Only women teachers could teach in them. Men, teaching in mixed

schools, were to be moved to boys' schools[49]. That only women should teach in mixed schools was reinforced again some time later when an official document declared that mixed schools with male teachers were to be closed[50].

It is also worth commenting that, with the construction of separate schools along sex lines, women teachers were to be found as headmistresses of girls' and mixed schools. This can be confirmed, for instance, in the town of Lisbon, where the name of each teacher in its various schools and the name of the headteacher are recorded. In boys' schools, where many women were already teaching, the headteacher was always a man; while in the two other types of schools the headteachers were always women[51].

A Brief Summary on the Development of Mass Schooling and the 'Feminisation' of Teaching

Before concluding this chapter, it is useful to sum up some of the changes with regard to the construction of mass schooling and the feminisation of teaching during the whole period 1910-1933, bringing together the data of this chapter and chapter 6.

What the data presented in both chapters demonstrates is that throughout the period of the Republic and the Military Dictatorship periods of small growth in the construction of mass schooling were followed by periods of stagnation or even negative growth. Table 6 combines the average annual rate of growth of both the school numbers and pupils' rolls throughout the period 1910-1933:

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49 "Aos Srs. Inspectores dos círculos escolares"(To the Inspectors of school circles), 24 Sept. 1927.

50 *Decree* nº 20181, 24 July 1931, art. 10º; and also *decree* nº 21401, 24 June 1932.

51 *Decree* nº 16802, 30 Apr 1929.

table 6
average annual rate of growth
of school numbers and pupils'rolls
1910-1933
%

	N. Schools	Pupils' rolls
1910-16	1.2	3.9
1916-19	1.4	-0.3
1920-23	-0.2	1.5
1923-26	0.9	-
1927-31	2.9	7.3
1931-33	-0.6	-0.3

As can be seen, there was no consistent growth in the school network and pupils' rolls concerning the period 1910-1933. As far as the expansion of the school network is concerned, it is the period 1927-1931 which presents the highest growth. Also expansion in pupils' rolls is most visible in the period of 1927-1931. Expansion of school network and pupils' rolls also took place during the first republican years, although at a lower rate.

By assembling the data for the percentages of men and women teachers in primary schools, in table 7, it is clear that the number of women teachers never ceased to grow:

table 7
Number of Women and Men Primary Teachers
1910-1933

	N. Men Teachers	N. Women Teachers	% WT
1910-11	2777	3031	52.2
1915-16	3033	4594	60.2
1918-19	3038	4902	61.7
1926-27	2778	5619	66.8
1928-29	2691	6357	70.2
1930-31	3030	6310	67.5
1931-32	2906	6791	70.0

Whilst the number of male teachers remained more or less the same, although with small increases or decreases, the number of women teachers (with the exception of the year 1930-31) was clearly expanding. Using again the average annual rate of growth of the number of men and women teachers, this constant increase becomes more visible:

table 8
average annual rate of growth
of men and women teachers
1910-1933
%

	Men Teachers	Women Teachers
1911-16	1.8	8.7
1916-19	0.5	2.2
1919-26	-0.8	2.
1927-31	2.2	2.9
1931-33	-0.4	7.6

According to these figures, it becomes apparent that, during the whole period of 1910-1933, the construction of mass schooling was developing at an uneven pace with periods of both positive and negative growth. Contrary to this fact, primary teaching, throughout the period under consideration, continuously reinforced its image as *women's work*. Thus, its construction preserved a certain autonomy from the pace of the development of mass schooling.

Conclusion

To understand the process of 'feminisation' of teaching and the construction of mass schooling in Portugal we need to consider the implications of the years of the Military Dictatorship in Portugal to both processes.

Under the Military Dictatorship, the State was subject to different pressures from those of the republican period, thus altering the terms under which it had to guarantee a context for capitalist accumulation. The establishment of censorship, the disarticulation of the union movement through the reinforcement of the repressive State apparatus and the containment of social tensions, due mainly to an increase in unemployment, constituted the main actions taken by the State during this period.

Additionally, reframing family life and the position of women in society in more traditional ways constituted further pressures upon the State. The regime of co-education was perceived, at the time, as threatening to the more traditional allocation of each gender to predefined social roles and to separate spheres of social life. For this reason it was abolished (rhetorically, as we have seen). The history of Portuguese State institutions, which were based on the separation of the sexes until the introduction of co-education in 1919, probably played some part in this return to the former regime.

The State enforced the separation of sexes under the banner of the 'moralisation' of the institutional life of schools. This was also to encompass those who were there to teach. Ideally, mixed schools should be closed, male teachers in charge of boys' education and women teachers, of girls'. However, 'pragmatic realism' enforced all the exceptions that official discourse did not admit. Policies which separated both male and female pupils and teachers were not pursued in a consistent way. Mass schooling was carried out with a 'minimalist logic' of curtailing the number of compulsory years and containing costs while, at the same time, attempts were made to extend school enrolments. Hence, mixed

schools continued to exist where the only teachers were women and where headteachers were headmistresses.

If mixed schools were tolerated and even continued to grow in numbers, this was presented as a transitory stage. Men teachers were forbidden to teach in mixed schools. No reasons were given for this interdiction. Possibly, the suspicions and stories (some, mentioned to me by one of the women teachers I interviewed in the process of collecting her life history) of sexual harassment of girls by men teachers gave weight to this prohibition of men teaching in mixed schools. However, the high number of women teachers in the occupation and a concern with reserving men teachers for boys' schools is the most likely explanation.

'To moralise' Portuguese social life through schooling and to reduce financial school costs to their minimum clearly were incompatible when both principles were put into practice. Separation of sexes was used in State policy as a way of achieving legitimation from certain Portuguese social groups but it was never fully realised during this period (nor at any stage of the authoritarian regime).

We may ask ourselves whether the question of 'who should sit in the teacher's chair' was still a conflictual question confronting the State and its policies (as it was during the republican period). In chapter 8 I will be return to this question. The important point to stress here is that women were confronting opposing images of themselves. On the one hand, they were expected to be tied up to their domestic duties. Their role as mothers, wives and housekeepers was increasingly audible. On the other hand, in specific areas of public life women were becoming

more visible, taking on salaried jobs. Primary teaching was one of them and it was able to consolidate, during this period, its reputation as *women's work* among many women who aspired to achieve some kind of autonomous life.

Chapter 8

'Women, the Best Partners for Men' - perspectives on women's role and forms of education in republican and dictatorial years

Introduction

Teaching by women was unquestionably conditioned by images of femininity, constructed within specific patriarchal relations both in the Republican years and under the Military Dictatorship. Consequently, the way women were represented in this period of transition by politicians, educators and social organisations and movements, is important evidence in the examination and discussion of the primary teaching as *women's work*. The images of 'femininity' in both periods had, generally speaking, a strong influence on the situation of women teachers. Sharif Gemie (1991) has underlined precisely this point regarding schoolmistresses in France in an earlier period, the middle of the nineteenth-century, stressing that: "behind the apparent absence of specific policy relating to schoolmistresses, there was a set of ideas and images operating which largely determined their position" (Gemie 1991:204). These ideas and images need to be related in a direct way with the existence of patriarchal relations in society at large, which restricted women's attitudes and activities, either in the 'householdplace', or in the 'workplace', and even more clearly in the 'citizenplace' (using once again Sousa Santos' concepts). The construction of women's political identities during these years was certainly conditioned by the ideas and

images on women's role in society. Accordingly, when attempting to understand the social processes which contributed to the 'feminisation' of teaching and to change teaching into *women's work*, we need to uncover the ideological perspectives on women's role and on forms of education which were involved in such construction.

Behind the constructed images of femininity lies a set of questions related to the influence in creating these images of specific political regimes such as the Republic and the Military Dictatorship. Did the Republic, as a political process, make a difference to perspectives on women's situation and their role in society? I think that confronting this question is important, since a pivotal concern within republicanism was the construction of the polity guided by the ideals of 'freedom, equality and fraternity'. How did these ideals permeate debates among republican politicians and educators, and the like, on the role and situation of women? How were women viewed by other social and political groups, such as the anarchists, so influential in the labour movement, the socialists and the feminists? In chapter 5, I have already referred to women's movements in relation to the enlargement of forms of citizenship, such as the right to education, to work and to vote. What were the perspectives of the several social and political movements regarding the issues of citizenship for women? Were the left/leftist groups united around this question? Presumably we are likely to find clear tensions among republicans, anarchists, socialists vis-a-vis feminists' proposals for greater access by women to the 'workplace' and to the 'citizenplace'. It is likely that women's open access to these spheres of social life was feared because of concerns that the

households would be deserted by women. It is also important to identify the main conflicts with regard to gender politics within and between these social and political groups.

Regarding the period of transition from the Republic to 'Estado Novo' - the period of the Military Dictatorship - a central question remains about whether there were clear changes in the way women were perceived. In chapter 6, at the societal level, there were increasing signs of the emergence of processes and institutions identified with the 'Estado Novo', albeit in a contradictory way. At the level of educational policies, the issues around gender politics were clearly conflictual. What basic assumptions about women and their rights were made by the increasingly dominant conservative politicians and educators? It is possible that patriarchal relations were reinforced with the implementation of the conservative political regime. One of the questions which needs to be addressed concerns whether there were restrictions in the access of women to the 'workplace' and to the 'citizenplace' (and if so, what they were). Did the production of a discourse which advocated an increasing involvement of women in their supposed domestic duties within the 'householdplace' develop in parallel with another which gave emphasis to the specific 'moral value of femininity'?

This is also a period where women were not only the object of such redefinition and emphasis but also made their views known on their own situation and role in Portuguese society, through their writings, public interventions and feminist organisations. For these women, particularly those living in urban areas, the question of *equality* with men was at the forefront of their concerns and struggles, as will be seen. Undoubtedly,

equality meant different things to the women of this period. Quite often, and according to different traditions, women were defined as the 'best partners for men'. What exactly was meant by this? For many, it can be said that a utilitarian view of women prevailed, whereby their gentleness and care made them most suited for marriage and family life. For others, such as Ana Osório, a central figure in the feminist-republican movement, which probably represented a small minority in the country, it meant equal access and treatment for women within a world that, generally, was already constructed by male rule (cf. chapter 4).

There were ideological and social tensions which affected the meaning of equality for both men and women. The strong relationship between political party organisations and the feminist movement conditioned the way *equality* was perceived and struggled for. Some of the feminist organisations, in particular the *Liga Republicana das Mulheres Portuguesas* (the Republican League of Portuguese Women, 1908-1919) emerged with the support of male Republican leaders and were seen, in particular periods, as too close to the Republican Party. The relationship between feminism and republicanism and the questions regarding women's franchise were conflictual giving rise to polemics in the press.

The debates and struggles which feminists and specific political groups maintained in Portuguese society, as well as the changes occurring in the 'worldplace' contributed to the slow change of patriarchal relations, in the sense analysed by Walby (1990) - i.e. the process of changing from 'private' to 'public forms of patriarchy' was underway. The acquisition of social and economic rights took place on contested terrain and, probably, as

a consequence, the changes in women's situation were slow, irregular in development and precarious.

Having previously (in chapter 5) outlined the situation of women in the period under analysis, in this chapter, I intend, firstly, to examine the various perspectives on women's role in society. In particular, republican views on women and their connections with positivism, which strongly influenced both this political movement and free-masonry, will be of special concern. Further, the feminist perspectives, in their different traditions, will also be addressed as they represented a strong and courageous challenge to patriarchal relations, within the conditions of production of 'first wave feminism' (to use Banks's concept 1986 once again). This examination of feminist perspectives consists of a selective review of the feminist movement in Portugal in this period. A more extensive review is beyond the scope of this thesis. What is important, at this stage, is to understand the feminist struggles related to the democratisation of the 'householdplace' and the opening of areas of the 'workplace' and the 'citizenplace' to women.

The second question, which relates to the first question, is a review of the debates around girls' education either in single-sex or co-educational schools. In fact, the question of co-education was intensively discussed throughout all the republican period both before and after its introduction in 1919 but came to an end sometime after 1927, when single-sex schools were re-introduced and rhetorically supported by the Military Dictatorship. Republicans, anarchists and feminists, in general, were united in supporting co-education as a form of achieving equality of opportunity for girls in schooling. It was a way of

emphasising that girls' education was just as important as boys'. The voices against co-education came from the conservatives who spoke in the name of a conventional morality and saw in co-education the 'danger of promiscuity' and 'free love'. Other conservative educators claimed that girls' education had a *specificity* - in terms of needlework and all the knowledge needed for the domestic role of the household - which would be completely lost with co-education. They feared the transformation of the sexual division of labour within the 'householdplace' and the competition of women in the 'workplace' and in the 'citizenplace'. Therefore, the debate on co-education or single-sex schools has a special relevance for the issues on women's role and on women teachers' situation in Portuguese society at that time.

The examination of the questions identified above - the images of femininity and perspectives on co-education - will shed light on the situation of women teachers in this period which is the subject of the third part of the chapter. They contribute to an understanding of the pressures to which women teachers were subjected and the contradictory discourses on their role and of about was expected from them within the profession. Women teachers' ability to teach and their expertise were sometimes questioned by men teachers but women found the opportunity to express their own views on these questions in educational journals. They also were able to demonstrate their opposition to policies which clearly discriminated against them.

I intend to review these perspectives and debates focusing not only on the written work of politicians, educators and militants from different traditions, but also on some of the

educational and teachers' journals (*O Professor Primário*, The Primary Teacher; *A Federação Escolar*, The School Federation; *A Educação Social*, Social Education; *A Escola Moderna*, The Modern School; *Educação Nacional*, National Education), the feminist journals (*Alma Feminina*, Feminine Soul and *A Mulher Portuguesa*, The Portuguese Woman), and the anarchist daily newspaper, *A Batalha* (The Battle).

I - Perspectives on The Role of Women in Republican and Dictatorial Times

In Part II of this thesis, when discussing women's role and situation in Portuguese society at the turn of the century, I identified the emergence of a 'new orthodoxy' relating to the question of women's work outside the domestic sphere. Among the perspectives examined, the 'positivists' - arguing on the basis of the contributions of the 'novel' sciences, such as craniometry, physiology, anatomy, etc - were divided between those who were critical of women working outside the domestic sphere, and those who supported it under particular conditions.

How far were these conceptions modified with the emergence of the republican regime (and the historically changing conditions) in which it emerged? Republicanism started in the mid nineteenth-century and had become an important political movement by the end of the century. Throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, republicanism embraced and reworked many of the perspectives of positivism. Fernando Catroga has studied the relationship between republicanism and positivism in Portugal (1977,1991) and underlines the crucial importance of the

latter in the consolidation of the former. Among other philosophical traditions of the time (Kantism, Proudhonism, etc), none influenced the republican movement more than positivism. Catroga claims that positivism was able to respond theoretically to the interests of specific social groups, such as the middle classes, mainly the urban lower middle class (probably those working in state institutions and in other service sectors), who struggled for political, social and cultural change. The fall of the Monarchy and the emergence of the Republic in 1910 represented the concretisation of the ascent of these social groups. Both republicanism and positivism shared a historicist view of the development of human history. Both returned to the "Enlightenment illusion according to which a new political order would be born from the dissemination of instruction" (Catroga 1991:308).

Given the influence of positivism in the republican movement and, subsequently, in the new order emerging with the 5th October 1910, it seems useful to examine, in the first place, views on women's role and on the images of femininity, which stemmed from positivism, especially from the theories of Auguste Comte. Although Comte had already influenced the images of femininity in the last decades of the Monarchy (as seen in chapter 4), it is in the period after 1910 that positivism needs to be considered for its impact on women's role in society. It was then, according to Catroga (1977:326), that "the emergence of the Republic was the victory of positivist philosophy itself, as a triumphant philosophy".

Secondly, I will review feminist views on such matters. Feminists were organised in their own groups at the same time as

belonging to masonic lodges and republican parties. These groups were rather small, especially if we distinguish between active and inactive membership. The *Liga Republicana das Mulheres Portuguesas* (League of Portuguese Republican Women) had more than three hundred names on its rolls, though not so many were present in the meetings it organised (Esteves 1992). It is mainly through these groups that women's voices were heard, though undoubtedly they did not represent the majority of women. They expressed probably the views of fractions of the urban middle and lower middle classes. As already stressed in chapter 5, although feminists struggled with tenacity for their social and political rights, the Republic did not provide women with the conditions and the rights for equal citizenship with men.

Thirdly, anarchist and socialist perspectives on women's role in society are addressed. The former represented one of the most influential traditions within the union movement. The latter had few representatives in Portugal at the time. They both expressed a consciousness of the oppressive power which patriarchal relations embodied and the conflict which their change provoked in men, no matter how radical they were. We may probably infer that the expression of radical views in strictly political and union matters did not go necessarily hand in hand with a positive response to a radical challenge of dominant gender relations.

My analysis of the different perspectives, from the lay republicans to the catholics, follows the logic of political events throughout the period of transition. Therefore, the most traditional perspective, supported by sectors connected with the Catholic Church, as well as by other conservative sectors, and dominant

from 1926 onwards shall be examined last. Given the intensity and influence of their contribution to the debate, I shall consider mainly the Catholic proposals of the Academic Centre for Christian Democracy (CADC) which attracted many university students of Coimbra during the republican years.

It is through the review of the perspectives just mentioned that I hope to clarify, on the one hand, the conflictuality surrounding women's role in Portuguese society in republican and dictatorial years. On the other hand, the review can also give us a sense of the issues which were considered as pivotal within the context of patriarchal relations. In examining the various perspectives, we may gain a sense of how the historical period under review is crucial with regard to gender politics by revealing the main tensions resulting from predicted changes in women's situation and role in Portuguese society.

. Positivist/Republican Views on Women

Positivism produced a negative image of women: they had not yet attained the 'positivist' stage, they were still at the 'metaphysical' stage. This meant, in male republican discourse, that they were guided by feelings and not by reason. Reason was seen as a male capacity. In fact, in the republican period, women were quite often mentioned as an impediment to progress and civilisation. It was necessary to eradicate the influence of the Catholic Church from the minds (and bodies) of women. Between husband and wife, there was a divergence concerning religion, because she was a believer and he was guided by 'reason'. Further, another powerful division existed between the two, since the wife

was ignorant, in terms of 'instruction', and the husband had access to the university education. Françoise Mayeur stresses this point regarding republicanism in France and the influence of positivism on it:

> As far as the republicans are concerned, the main question lies in the husband who works and does not find any understanding, but only hostility, from the women of his family, who are united against him (Mayeur 1983:16).

As a result, it was necessary to give 'instruction' to women in order that family life and kinship relations could be guided by rationality and laws, judged as appropriate to adjust them to social life, and in particular to diminish the Church's influence in modern society (that aspiring modern society). Therefore, it was the 'expressive' side of women, i.e. their feelings, and their role in kinship relations which was stressed. Further, this 'expressiveness' is confined to an instrumental definition, as will be seen below.

However, if women's 'expressiveness' was seen as negative in relation to the political field, it was proclaimed as the distinctive quality which differentiated women from men. Rosaria Manieri (1978), in her analysis of Comte's perspective on women's role in society (in his *Preliminary Discourse on Positivism*), stresses that women are seen as determined by their 'nature' which reflects in their physical debility in contrast to male strength. As a consequence, men are able to operate upon nature and transform it both theoretically and practically while women are driven to attract men to themselves through persuasion and charm:

> [Comte constructs his theory] acccording to the Hobbesian notion of human nature as essentially aggressive and competitive, aided by the concept of *homo economicus* from classical economists, and applying to the civil world the

> Darwinist biological principle of the survival of the fittest. (...)[Hence] he states that, being the economic, social and political world constructed on the basis of the natural world (that is, being regulated by the law of the fittest), the woman shall be subjected to a fierce daily competition with the stronger sex, a competition that she will not be able to bear. (...) The price will be [the loss of] her own femininity, the delicacy of her feelings, which is her essential merit and the source of her value (Manieri 1978:26).

Comte's theory assumed that women were released from material production which was men's domain. In exchange, women needed to offer men the care and solicitude of the household as a haven against the competitiveness and aggressiveness of the public world. Comte stressed this point still further by saying, in a non-reflective and discriminatory way, that:

> Isn't woman's true function to offer to man the solicitude of the domestic household and receive in exchange all the resources necessary for living, provided by work? I would prefer to see a mother washing her children's nappies than see her living her life wasting the products of her intelligence (A. Comte, *Preliminary Discourse on Positivism*, quoted in Manieri 1978:32).

As a result, women were excluded from the public world. They were depoliticised, not only because political matters were not seen as their concern, but also because, in the perspective of Comte, they would serve as a moderate power to dilute social conflicts. Women should use their "weapons of sentiment" in order that men, either the bourgeois, through a more humanitarian treatment of the workers, or the proletariat, via "sweeter and more realistic means", more easily should find the solution to their opposition.

As a social thinker, Comte recognised the central importance of private relations for the social formation as well as

the central role of women in preventing the disintegration of the domestic sphere (Manieri 1978).

After this brief review of Comte, it may be useful at this stage to examine his influence on the perspectives of Portuguese republican leaders, educators and political activists with regard to women's role and situation. How did these men - and women - analyse and reflect upon the situation of women in Portugal? What were their concerns regarding the change in the situation of Portuguese women?

It is also important not to forget that, within the intellectual atmosphere of the most positivist republican sectors, there was another influence stemming from Darwin and his disciples, mentioned in chapter 4. In the Darwinist tradition, the differences between the two sexes due to their different biological instincts, and also to their different relationships to reproduction were emphasised. Different social behaviours were functionally necessary, in order that reproduction could occur through "natural selection". Men would compete among themselves in order to attract women; the winner would be the most suitable. Feminine passivity was caused by women's role and place in reproduction since, as Rosalind Coward puts it, in assessing Darwin's views on gender (and his followers' views), the "female cell ensures the constancy of the species whereas the male reproductive cell has acquired a peculiar and distinctive capacity for mutation" (Coward 1983:78-79). Undoubtedly, such an emphasis on genetic determinisms had to put some strain on republicanism because this political movement constructed much of its political discourse on the basis of the importance of education and culture - only in this way could reason illuminate the illiterate mind (see

Catroga 1991). It is no surprise that, in less elaborate discourses, it is possible to find these contradictory elements co-existing. In the review presented in this chapter, Darwinist elements are evident in the writings of republican educators and politicians, as will be seen below. However, even if some elements of the Darwinist heritage remained, others were debated, and denied.

Some voices contested the crude view of women's role in society offered by Darwin. Women were, in fact, seen as very much influenced by their biological functions. Nevertheless, to claim their biological weakness resulted in their inferior intellectual development and lack of potential for education was unacceptable for those republicans who ventured to debate the tensions within such discourses. For instance, the doctor and lyceum teacher, Abílio Barreiro, wrote in 1912:

> (...) the natural selection that, in Darwin's opinion, explains the muscular superiority of men (...) cannot demonstrate in any way the organic or intellectual superiority of either of the sexes. For this, it would be necessary to know previously which one needed more organic capacity and intelligence: whether it was the woman who had to feed the children, educate them and govern the household, or the man who was restricted to the role of warrior, shepherd or peasant. The problem does not give clear clues and is not in accordance with Darwin's solution which stresses that the men's intellectual average is higher than women's, and for that reason, men would be predetermined to hold the monopoly of 'instruction' (Barreiro 1912: 15-6).

From then onwards, Barreiro emphasised the "high mission of a woman (...) the management of the household, the education of her children, and as far as possible, to be of some support to her husband" (Barreiros 1912:41). Although he was critical of some elements of the Darwinist heritage, he did not distance himself from the most common perspective among republicans in Portugal concerning women's role in society.

In fact, the most widely held view on that matter was the emphasis on the unique role of women as housekeepers, wives and mothers, justified on the basis of their most natural and biological qualities. This was clearly stated in the republican amendments to the 1867 Civil Code, mentioned in chapter 5. For many of them, Science had already demonstrated biologically, physiologically and sociologically that "women's true role was maternity as their own aspirations already indicated" (Mello 1910:254). Women's work was only supported by the more open social and political groups which were organically related to one of the republican parties or maintained close relations with republicanism. It is not coincidence that women teachers were probably more represented in these more open political groups. In 1923, half of the membership of the masonic lodges (either mixed or female) were teachers, while the second occupation was housekeeper comprising only 20% of the total number of these women. The masonic lodges had between 20 and 35 members each (Costa w/d:55). Moreover, in the feminist and republican organisation, the *Liga Republicana das Mulheres Portuguesas*, women teachers represented a significant proportion of its militants - they constituted the most numerous occupational group (Esteves 1992:236).

Hence, a quite widely-held perspective on women's role among republican writers, educators and politicians, was the support for women's duties in the home. It was certainly a discourse about dutiful mothers, wives and housekeepers. Among the many quotations that could be cited here, the following is one elaborate and revealing example:

> Great and noble is woman's mission on earth. (...) As a wife, she is the constant and loyal partner of the husband, sharing his misadventures, cradling him in her arms in his sadness

> and weakness, applauding his work and efforts, being a fountain where he can quench his thirst, a locker where he can deposit his intimate thoughts, a sanctuary where his dignity is safe (...)(Vieira 1924)[1].

Many republican leaders clearly stated that the best place for women was the domestic sphere, but they expected that republican housekeepers, mothers and housewives would build support for the Republic in that sphere. They should contribute to the construction of the hegemony of the State over the Catholic Church. Women's 'expressiveness', somewhat paradoxically, could be useful to the republican struggle. Women should be able to put all their energies into promoting the Republic, within their families, in the network of their personal relationships. António J. Almeida expressed this quite clearly:

> The modern Christ, which is the People, needs to be himself rescued, by women's contribution, as the constant and careful beings they are. (...) It is necessary that liberal women stand up to fanatical women, who are under the influence of priests, and, with the seductive power of their words, promote the true ideals of liberation. (...) We do not aim to bring women into the streets or into clubs, involving them in great agitation, from which Portuguese women have distanced themselves so well. What is needed is that they exert their influence and republican propaganda in the family, in kinship relations (António J. Almeida, quoted in Esteves 1992:40-1).

Moreover, some of the traditions within republicanism added references to women's rights in the family on the basis that they were considered *equal* to men. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, there was a lot of ambiguity around the way they used this notion. In what respect were women *equal* in the family? Afonso Costa (the leading Republican leader, mentioned in chapter 5), in one of his parliamentary discourses,

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[1]This was written by a woman teacher, Alzira Vieira, to a teacher's education journal, *O Professor Primário* (The Primary Teacher), where republicans and anarchists debated their views on education.

explained that the republican regime "ha[d] transformed the wife into a partner for her husband":

> [the wife is able] to assume more delicate functions, and is in a better position as an educator of children. (...) She is not only granted the government of the household, the superior administration of the family. She is the careful custodian of family unity, the main educator of those who will be the main leaders of the destiny of the country. The wife is the defender of her husband's patrimony which she needs to administer and multiply (Costa 1913:53)

Such a rhetorical justification was blatantly unable to hide the fact that women were not equal to men, even in different and distinct social spheres. Women were not 'masters' in the domestic sphere as men were in the public sphere. As demonstrated, men hold power in the family as well as in the public space. To be man's equal meant to be a "partner", which, in turn, meant to be in charge of domestic duties in a subordinate position. It is true that with the republican laws, married women were granted some rights. By law, they were no longer defined as obedient and compliant beings to their husbands. They were able to get a civil divorce based on the same arguments as men. They were able to publish their own work without their husband's permission. However, these small gains were jeopardised by a legal system where men owned the economic assets of the family (those of wives and children included). Geraldine Scanlon (1986), writing about Spain, also maintains that there was much rhetoric in the emphasis the republican discourse put on the equality between married partners, mainly during the period after the 1868 Republican Revolution. "The patriarchal structure of the famliy was never seriously questioned. (...) And even the introduction of civil marriage was basically anticlerical and not a feminist measure" (Scanlon 1986:8/9). Moreover, in Portugal, as some

stressed at the time, the regulations produced by the State were often quite reluctantly implemented. Here again, the notion developed by Sousa Santos of the 'heterogeneous structural places' (1985a; 1990b) helps throw light on the contradictory and ambiguous activity of the State itself. There is no need to expand once again on the arguments surrouding this notion (cf. chapter 1).

Within republican-positivism, women were not equal to men. They were, in the best Comtean tradition, given their assumed 'expressiveness', understood as irrational beings. They were at the mercy of unpredictable social forces. Manuel de Arriaga[2], for instance, said: "Women have been, until now, the best ally of tyranny" (quoted in Osório 1905:86.). Another republican (a positivist scientist and psychiatrist) Júlio de Matos, stressed also that women were those who most attentively followed the theologian, the priest, attracted by the ritualistic, theatrical manifestations of his speech. Women had "malleable minds", which meant they were easily influenced, not reflexive and not used to mental reasoning (quoted by Catroga 1977: 145, from Júlio de Matos *Os Inimigos da Philosophia Positivista*, The Enemies of Positivist Philosophy').

It was with such Comtean assumptions that republican leaders looked towards the political field, and, on the eve of the republican elections, started to make their own intentions clear regarding women's vote. As Catroga underlines,

> Comte, Proudhon, Michelet, and, among us, Teófilo Braga[3], theorised women's presumed political incapacity on the basis of a psychological analysis which related politics to

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2 Manuel de Arriaga was an important republican leader and became the President of the Republic.

3 Teófilo Braga was one of the most important leaders of republicanism, becoming President of the Republic.

> rationality and women to feelings, a quality which was seen as incompatible with the management of the economy and public affairs. Others were picking up the arguments of Brocca and Topinard to demonstrate the same idea (Catroga 1991:287).

Women were indeed denied the vote, as pointed out above. Some contemporary authors, such as Catroga, appear to give more weight to the strategical political reasons which may have led republicans to its denial. They feared that if women were granted the vote, monarchists, Catholics and other conservative forces would be able to defeat the republicans as well as the project of secularisation, which was seen, by them, as the project of *modernity* for Portugal. Women's vote should be denied since, as a republican MP claimed in Parliament, in the countries where it had been introduced, "the effects were bad, because almost all women are conservatives" (quoted in Catroga 1991:292). The writer Carlos Mello, in his book *O Escândalo do Feminismo* ('The Scandal of Feminism', 1910), described what was happening in the USA, where women had already won the vote. According to him, the "republican and democratic parties" were not happy with women's suffrage. "They declared that women were less prone to electoral corruption; however, on the other hand, they struggled more zealously than men". They also criticised women for having introduced "hysterical" attitudes into such matters and that they were incapable of holding wider views in politics (Mello 1910:142). Political democracy implied participation, but rationalised participation, i.e. with autonomy from the Catholic Church. "Liberty could only be educated in a secularised framework and with complete political autonomy from traditional theological foundations" (Catroga 1991:252). Catroga is convinced that the republican political attitude was not commanded by biological or

metaphysical questions ("few would dare to defend women's inherited inferiority", ibidem:308), but was based on the above mentioned strategic reasons. However, the argument here is that women were discriminated against on the basis of their supposed irrationality and 'expressiveness', assumptions which supported patriarchal relations. If this was not so, then why was the vote for literate women (even when restricted to women with higher degrees) not granted by the Republic?

Certainly this denial of women's franchise presented some difficulties for the republican politicians who, before the emergence of the Republic, defended universal enfranchisement as one of their first priorities. However, after its emergence, they started raising doubts about who had the 'capacity' to vote. Lunatics and the insane were to be excluded, as well as the illiterate and women. Not only illiterate women, but women as such, apparently because of their gender, due to their 'expressiveness' and 'irrationality', as Afonso Costa's (the republican leader) rhetorical statement, in a parliamentary session in 1913, on the women's vote, makes clear:

> We, who have ended slavery [meaning 'wives' slavery'], who have granted equality to men (sic), who have turned women into partners for men, we have reversed our position concerning women's political capacity to vote in similar terms to men. This is because the problem needs to be confronted with the question of the dispositions and even structures of such capacities [i.e. the capacity for voting] (...). The only thing necessary to require is *the development of reason, it is a psychological phenomenon*. (...) The State needs more and more active, superior, prepared leaders. (...) The Republic wants conscious. defined, confident, reflexive minds (Costa 1976:531/533, emphasis added).

In the minds of these republican leaders, women did not present such qualities. For others, the emphasis lies in the

inappropriate conditions of Portuguese society. Women had certainly the same political rights as men, it was said, but they should not exercise them because there was corruption everywhere and women would be hurt by the experience; they should be spared from political life in the same way as they were spared from giving their lives for their country at times of war (see Barreiro 1912:71; also Botto-Machado 1910:197).

Therefore the dominant republican-positivist perspective on women was their main mission in the home as educators, wives and housekeepers, which was presented in the most rhetorical way, disguising the fact that the republican governments were denying women most of the rights they were granting to men on the basis of their citizenship. Moreover, this was a denial of women's political rights by political groups and organisations for whom the political sphere was aboveall the arena where victories were to be won. According to Catroga (1991), what distinguished the republicans, especially the more radical ones, from the socialists, was the priority they gave to politics and the emphasis put on the kind of political regime rather than on economic questions:

> As far as republicanism was concerned, the crucial rights of a man were those of a citizen, understood as rights of participation in political power, and legitimated by the vote (Catroga 1991:251).

This makes republicanism even more contradictory in its denial of women's vote. Nevertheless, republicanism was not a homogenous political movement, and certainly republican militants, the radical sectors, probably those who supported women in autonomous masonic lodges, against its leadership, were among the supporters of women's vote. At the *Feminist and*

Educational Congress, in 1924, some of them made speeches. The President of the Republic, in the opening session, stated that because women were the educators of their children, they should have the right to intervene in political affairs; another republican leader stated that just because women had great domestic virtues, this should not imply their "slavery outside the family" (Bernardino Machado); still others were conscious that the Republic still had not given women what was promised to them (Magalhães Lima); another declared that the Republic should quickly grant women their rights (Abranches Ferrão)[4]. However their voices, some of which were politically important, were not strong enough to become the dominant perspective within republicanism.

During the Military Dictatorship, republicans did not produce much on women's rights, because of the political conditions of the time. Although some anarchists and socialists, as well as feminist groups, still wrote on the subject, republican voices were generally fading away on these questions, with a few exceptions. For instance, one teacher was able to give his support to women's vote in the education journal (republican and anarchist) *O Professor Primário* (The Primary Teacher) before it was suspended (as it was in the events following the republican revolt of February 1927). However, this support appears more as a political strategy, since it provided space for parodying the political leaders of the last months:

> It was recently said that the publication of a new electoral law is on its way and that finally the right to vote is going to be granted to women (...) Our nice suffragettes will now be able to claim victory. Very well. Women are also human beings.

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[4] *Alma Feminina*, 1924, VII (May-August), 23-24.

> Regarding political rights, it is better that trousers are not distanced from skirts. (...) It was not fair that a woman lawyer or doctor was not able to vote, while her humble male employees were able to do so... She is not afraid of the possible disunion within her home, where the husband could be 'democratic', the wife, conservative, and the mother-in-law, a leftist. It may really happen that a well orchestrated political symphony is produced, able to cause envy to the savage rhythm of the 'jazz-band' or 'charleston', which are delighting our super-civilised people.(...) For some time, women have come out decidedly from a rigid conventional order to gain the positions once reserved only to men. (...) Why should women not to be able to vote? Is it because many men see less poetry in their votes than in their gracious smiles? If I may have the permission to say so, to vote is often to laugh. If people are not shocked by the nonsensical giggles of some unpleasant moustache [probably a reference to general Gomes da Costa, one of the leaders of the military coup of 28 May 1926], why should we be ashamed of the innocence of the smiles our wives, our sisters, our brides carry to the polls? Thus, let women vote! (Mendonça 1927)

This passage apparently supporting women's right to vote, in fact addresses them as devalued beings, almost as childish, patronised beings.

. anarchist and socialist views on women's role

Some anarchists expressed their views on women. Emilio Costa, a unionist and political militant,[5] wrote a book called *As Mulheres e o Feminismo* (Women and Feminism, 1928) where he debated many of the issues related to the subject. Emílio Costa stressed that the 'woman's question' was, if not the most important, at least one of the most important problems raised by

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[5] Emílio Martins Costa (1877-1952) started his political life as a republican militant and a member of the free-masonry. However, some years later, he joined the anarchist movement, editing political journals, writing articles, giving conferences, teaching in union schools. He maintained close relations with the international anarchist movement and wrote several articles for its French journal called *Les Temps Nouveaux*. Emílio Costa was also the private secretary of Francisco Ferrer, a radical educator, executed by the Spanish in 1909 (?). Costa was a secondary school teacher and later a technician in a state institution related to the vocational education (IOP, Institute of Vocational Counselling). During the years he lived under the "Estado Novo", he joined the political opposition. He wrote on anarchism, unionism, Karl Marx, the education of the proletariat, etc (see Ventura & Pedroso 1977 on Emilio Costa).

the First World War. He later clarified that what he was really referring to was the question of women's work outside the domestic sphere. It was clear for him that the main role of women in society was "to start a family, do the housework and educate her own children" (Costa 1928:49). This did not mean that he disagreed with women's work outside the home. Women had a right to work, to gain their autonomy from men. However, he appeared to speak in the name of those men who were feeling "domestic unrest" (Costa 1928:50) caused by the work of 'their' women outside the home.[6] "It is the duality of [women's] occupations that is one of the greatest problems of our times" (ibidem). Both functions, i.e the domestic and work outside the home were conflictual, disrupting family life.

> Family life tends to disappear. (...) I belong to those who consider this a bad thing, although it is risky to say so because I will be considered a conservative. (...) For a while, I have not favoured the woman going out to work, that woman who does not have time to go home to eat and instead goes to restaurants with (or without) her husband and children. As a result, she looks at her home as a dull place, which is natural. Therefore, she prefers to go out daily with (or without) her family, to public amusements, the cinema, dancing, etc., not being able to understand that she can amuse herself in her own home. (...) What do the husband and children gain from such family life? I have never obtained a satisfactory answer (Costa 1928:68-9).

In Emílio Costa's view, women should work outside the home, but not once they were married. "Not at the same time" was his preferred formula - meaning that a housewife could not be a professional, a white-collar worker or a factory worker woman at

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[6] The same double standards appear in an article in the anarchist newspaper *A Batalha* (to be further referenced below), where there was support for women's right to work outside the household, although this work was immediately interpreted as threatening men's employment, security and comfort (Frias 1925:1).

the same time. They needed to make their own options. He also warned women against their many illusions about paid work.

With such arguments, he went on advising the feminist movement of its main tasks. Costa distanced himself from the feminist struggle for the vote. In his view, political rights were not so important - and, as an anarchist this was in accordance with the main assumptions of the movement: political rights were secondary. The most important issues were economic questions. Firstly, the feminist movement should value manual work among women (clearly aiming at sectors of the labour aristocracy and the lower middle class) who were at risk of forming an army of "declassées" - those who gained some instruction and wanted a 'decent job', i.e a non-manual one, but were at pains to obtain it. He asked quite ironically: "They that have learned to repeat verbs, chemical formulas, geometrical demonstrations like parrots, would they like to be seamstresses or milliners?" (Costa 1928:56).

Secondly, it was necessary to support the right of all women to receive education in their own right. This should occur according to the main precepts of the 'Escola Única' (the single school for all, to which I have referred in chapter 6). Further, women's education was important because it would prepare women better for household management and for educating their children. They would also be able to gain "the consciousness that their work was the most useful, the most noble, the most interesting for their own mentality" (Costa 1928:69).

Thirdly, it was necessary to develop propaganda to promote the occupations which were most appropriate for women's natural qualities. Portugal needed good nurses. Further, the garden, the orchard, the vegetable-garden were magnificent places for

women to work. Feminists should organise teaching for such occupations. Of course, it was important not to forget the decorative activities so suitable for femininity (ibidem:65-6).

Fourthly, it was necessary to ameliorate the conditions in which housework was undertaken. Electricity should be provided for households at low prices. Domestic appliances were already making their appearance and constituted a real difference to domestic duties. In that way, the domestic servant could be dispensed with. Costa could add in a discriminatory way: "It is better for women's emancipation to get electricity at low cost, than to multiply the number of women lawyers, engineers or deputies, however talented they might be " (Costa 1928:69).

Finally, and most important of all, it was necessary to fight for the 'male breadwinner's wage', so that women would not have to work. This appears in his view to be one of the best means of overcoming 'domestic unrest' and of restoring family life which he praised so highly.

What is interesting in Emílio Costa's contribution is that as early as the late 1920s, the Portuguese male unionists were already supporting a 'family wage' and, as a consequence, a dependent wife (cf. Walby 1986). The anarchists (at least some of its fractions), who were quite radical in Portugal at the time on many questions (such as the provision of universal comprehensive schools, the positive evaluation of manual work compared to mental work, support for the peace movement opposing the First World War, the modernisation of housework via technological improvements) were supporting discriminatory measures regarding married women's work. Clearly there was a gender divide when the questions of work and family were brought together in unionist and

radical political movements. As the book came out in 1928, his views may have been influenced by the social conditions established by the Military Dictatorship.

Analysing the anarchist daily newspaper *A Batalha* ('The Battle'), published between 1919 and 1927, it is evident that their views on such matters were sometimes contradictory. Although gender issues were clearly not a central concern for *A Batalha*, women's equality in the 'workplace' was supported[7]. When these issues were referred to, it was stressed that men and women had in common economic exploitation. For that reason, feminist issues did not exist: "we are firmly convinced that there is not a feminist problem to solve, but only a social question, i.e. the moral and political emancipation of the female gender depends on the economic liberation of the people". In spite of this statement, they sent a message supporting the *Feminist and Educational Congress*, which met in 1924, underlining that the equality of sexes should be considered only "as a stage in the journey that men and women need to go through to attain happiness"[8]. A slightly different version was supported in another article, in 1925, entitled "The victories of feminism depend mainly upon the economic situation of women in society". It was underlined that the aim of feminism was not the emancipation of women: "one sex cannot be emancipated alone". Feminism was mainly to put an end to the "monstruous inequality between men and women". It was mainly concerned with the granting to women of the same rights as men[9]. The article, quite well written and argued - demonstrated its

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[7] See, for instance, *A Batalha* 1924, V (1593), 6 February, and VI (1673), 10 May.
[8] In *A Batalha* 1924, VI (1673),10 May.
[9] In *A Batalha* 1924, VI (1673),10 May.

support for feminist perspectives, although assuming that *feminism could not be considered as emancipation* [10].

There were also appeals to the need of women becoming union members. In that way, not only were they contributing to change the conditions of workers, but also the union was the best school for future mothers who should be able "to teach children the road conducting to economic and social equality" (Freitas 1924:4).

In the educational press, there were also some anarchist voices through which women's activities were defined in non-deterministic terms and given equal status with those of their male peers. It is worth mentioning, for instance, some articles in the educational journal *Educação Social*, where the problem was discussed and the "biological argument" questioned, sustained by historical and anthropological evidence. In one of the articles, deterministic conceptions of woman's role are related to power relations. Thus it is stated:

> (...) man turns the woman into a domestic animal who does not know how to think, reflect, be aware of her rights and duties. He does not teach her in order that she might be a human being. He is only worried about changing her into a "gifted" woman, who is able to amuse, to please, to show her abilities, her sensualities, who can bang out Chopin on the piano, the sensuous cabaret melodies or the "fado" of musical shows, who can sway in a licentious way, etc [11].

The author stressed woman's right to apply on an equal basis for every kind of job, confident in her ability to carry it out, considering that "professions or social occupations should not be based on sex; their choice should depend only on social conditions" (ibidem).

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[10] In *A Batalha*, VII (1918), 26 February 1925.

[11] Adolfo Lima, in *Educação Social*, 1925, II (3) March, 15, p. 89.

In fact, in many anarchist writings, the emphasis put on economic contradictions to explain women's situation clearly neglected the importance of the struggles and movements to change patriarchal relations at the political level, although in the same publications these struggles could be praised for contributing to change the situation of women towards men. It is clear that in their minds the basic contradiction was capitalism, and that patriarchy would be annulled by the overcoming of the basic economic contradictions. In that way, they were merely reproducing traditional left views on the matter. However, it is also necessary to stress that the anarchist Adolfo Lima, the editor who wrote quite often in *Educação Social* (among others) did not embrace such views, and equally addressed the importance of women's social, poltical and economic rights.

The socialist movement had only a few representatives in the country at the time. One of them, Jaime F. Dias, wrote a small paper on the question, using hyperbolical language, glorifying women for their caring, loving feelings as well as for their brilliant faculties of intelligence and work. It was a discourse on the 'slavery' women have suffered for centuries both in the home and, later, at work, under men's power. It was also an invitation to the feminist movement - as "a grandiose celebration for the emancipation of conscious and cultivated women" (Dias 1929:2) - to follow the socialist movement. Socialist women were those who were really fighting the bourgeois and capitalist State, that in conjunction with the Catholic Church, aimed to delay their liberation. Women had the right to education as well as to work, which implied - and at this point he quoted the socialist leader

Benoit Malon - that equal work required equal pay. They had also the right to political intervention. The socialists were clearly less well represented than the anarchists, and in particular, in the labour movement, in Portuguese society, at the time, where the strongest influence was in fact anarchist (for a history of the anarchist movement in Portugal see Freire 1988). In the paper, Jaime Dias, at least the fraction he represented, appeared more innovative than the anarchists regarding women's position in the home.

The more emphatic support that socialists (at least through Dias), gave to women's liberation (much more than that given by the anarchist Emílio Costa) can probably be understood in terms of the relationships that existed between feminists and anarchists. Many of the feminists were republican women either members of republican parties or members of masonic lodges. Anarchists had, in fact, a hard time under the republican governments (see Candeias 1992). And feminist-republicans claimed as one of their priorities the right to vote, which was regarded by the anarchists as an 'illusion'. In this light, it is possible to understand, in part, the patronising tone of Emílio Costa's address concerning feminists in Portugal.

. feminist views on women's role

Feminists were not a unified movement in the country in the period under consideration. The first organisation to emerge was the *Liga Republicana das Mulheres Portuguesas* (the Republican League of Portuguese Women) which clearly had strong connections with the republican movement. Some important male republican

leaders contributed to the emergence of the League, such as Bernardino Machado, António J. Almeida, Magalhães Lima[12]. Other feminist organisations - such as the *Associação de Propaganda Feminista* (Association for Feminist Propaganda, founded in 1912) and the *Conselho Nacional das Mulheres Portuguesas* (National Council of Portuguese Women, founded in 1914) - emerged later, were more autonomous from the republican movement and established close contact with international feminist organisations (Esteves 1992; Silva 1983). The *Associação de Propaganda Feminista*, in fact, declared from the outset that one of its main concerns was the "study of women's franchise, which is the crucial basis for women's complete political and social liberation" (Osório 1912:2).

With the exception of the League, which (as one of the most important feminist organisations) has been analysed in quite a comprehensive study (Esteves 1992), the other feminist organisations are under researched. Therefore, I will focus mainly on this organisation.

The first priorities of the League were civil and economic rights as well as support for republican ideals. The League had the following aims:

> (...) women's education and instruction in democratic principles; civic propaganda, following republican and democratic ideals; revision of laws that concerned women and children; the establishment of nurseries, play-groups, asylums, maternity wards, schools of domestic service and everything required to protect and educate children, and to raise the status of women from their deficient position in Portuguese society (*Statuses of the League*, quoted in Esteves 1992:27).

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[12] The first two later became Presidents of the Republic, later; the third was the *Great Master of Oriente Lusitano*, the most important mason organisation.

Ana Osório, its first President, in her first address to the members of the organisation, emphasised these aims stating that women should "enter social life as men's partners and collaborators" (quoted in Esteves 1992:27).

Undoubtedly, the attempt to reconcile republican aims with feminist objectives brought many tensions and defeats for the feminist movement. As we have seen, some ambiguity existed in republican male discourse on women. There was a discourse on women's rights stating that women were human beings who should be granted the same rights as men. However, at the same time, the attempt to involve women politically in the daily republican movements appeared as quite instrumental: 'liberal women' should be used to counteract the influence of the Church and of the 'fanatical women' under its influence. Women had been brought to the political front, it appeared, mainly for tactical reasons. A similar process took place within the masonic lodges where women were invited initially to join in and were later dismissed (see Costa w/d). Esteves (1992) stresses the tensions within the League in this way:

> The equilibrium between the two factions [i.e. those members who considered the defence of the republican regime as the main task, and those, who from 1913, with the refusal of the right to vote, wanted to struggle mainly for feminist issues] was never easy. The ambiguities emerged almost immediately when the League presented itself as a supporter both of women and children and of the republican regime. The League was not able to understand that only at the level of utopia, or in specific conjunctures, could feminist aspirations and republican aims be reconciled (Esteves 1992:30).

What were the assumptions about women's role that the League was striving for? The main assumption was about women

being equal to men, but this, as I have said earlier, meant different things for its members.

The League made the struggle for divorce one of its main targets. This was in conjunction with strong criticism of what, traditionally, marriage represented for women, under the regulations of the Civil Code of 1867. It was mainly the unveiling of the completely subordinate status of women within marriage, before the publication of the new republican regulations on this issue:

> The girl who is to be married is maintained in the most complete ignorance, compelled to such naivety, taught to be submissive to man. Man does not find in marriage a loyal partner and collaborator, but only searches to destroy a virginity and finds ignorance which amuses him (Osório 1911a:31).

As previously mentioned, in the view of the militant feminists, the struggle for divorce was to grant women equal status with men, at least in the family, which in their perspective would lead to other rights. The republican government supported this struggle - the divorce law was published one month after the Republic was declared. However, many fractions of Portuguese society, particularly those led by the Catholic Church, totally opposed it. Even within republican ranks, feminists had to demonstrate that divorce was not leading women to misery. The polemical dispute between a well-known male republican writer and politician, Raul Proença, and Ana Osório was recorded by Osório herself. According to Osório, Proença published an article, in a newspaper, in which he stressed that a divorced woman was despised by society, because she had already lived with a man and was not living with him any more. If she married a second time,

her new husband would be thinking about her first husband all the time. Osório questioned that divorce would necessarily be seen as so repulsive as Proença predicted. She used the occasion to emphasise again women's equal right to being considered as autonomous persons and not as the sexual property of men:

> Everything that Mr. Raul Proença has imagined that the second husband may think or feel about the woman who has been married before, applies equally to what women may think (...) of their partners. And if men see themselves with more rights than women, claiming rights over the past lives of their partners, this is because they are still psychologically used to a prejudice: they are used to seeing women as their property and themselves as the unquestionable and absolute masters of their material virginity (Osório 1911a:133).

As far as the right to work was concerned, there lay the backbone of the equality argument. Autonomous life was achieved by access to the 'workplace', doing 'honest work'. Women were to participate in the same way in it, "in every field of activity, according to their intellectual capacities (...) and their own ambitions" (Osório 1912). This was in fact what the most militant sector - Ana Osório, Maria Velleda, Maria F. Gonçalves and others - expressed, giving all their support to the right of women to work. Women needed to work and not just for 'pocket money'. It was their social being as citizens that would be constructed through work. Women's right to work meant that it was necessary to ask for the opening of new areas of the 'workplace' for women. This also meant that equal pay would apply to women. And women should refuse to work for less money than previously paid to men. Moreover, it was necessary to fight against the prejudice regarding women's work. Osório stressed in a defiant way:

> Probably, we, Portuguese women, will have to strike (...) in order to be considered as human beings, with the right to paid

> work, since we have - something which till now has not been contested - the right to live (Osório 1918:43).

However, for most of the members of the League, the right to work should only concern single women. For this majority, women were seen firstly as wives, mothers and housekeepers. J. Esteves (1992) has already stressed the ambiguities of the League regarding women's work:

> The League did not support a radical view on these matters. Instead, it aimed to reconcile the idea of women's right to work with their domestic obligations. (...) For many of its members, work outside the home was only justified in exceptional circumstances (such as the case of a single woman without a husband to support her). This should never clash with domestic life and the support that women should bring to their homes (Esteves 1992:149).

The emphasis of the League on the domestic duties of women is clearly ambiguous, in particular to our contemporary eyes. However, from another perspective, it could be interpreted as a strategy (not only on the part of the League, but of other feminist organisations, such as the *Association for Feminist Propaganda*, see Osório 1912) for convincing people of the moderate intentions of feminism, i.e. that the movement did not want to dissociate women from domestic duties. It could be seen as a negotiation of the boundaries of the feminist struggle, attempting to gain wider support for women's right to work outside the home, but assuring that women did not want to ruin family life by diluting domestic duties. It is such a frequent argument in feminist writings that one is tempted to interpret it more as a strategy to reassure an almost hostile society on feminist issues than a platform programme. Feminists knew only too well that the domestic sphere continued to be legally defined in terms of women's subordination, mainly in economic matters. In

fact, the hostility towards feminists and independent women was certainly intense and widespread due to the frequent caricatures of feminists that many writers reproduced with sexist overtones (for instance, Cunha 1934; Castro 1933). It was, in particular, their way of dressing, their hair style, their smoking of cigarettes and their wearing a monocle as well as shortened skirts which were often referred to. There was clearly a stereotype of the feminist and independent woman spreading throughout Portuguese urban society (see for instance examples quoted in *O Professor Primário*, - The Primary Teacher, 1926, 377). The fear of appearing as 'viragos', i.e. looking as if they were men, in ways of dressing and attitudes, was certainly widespread as the testimony of a woman student of medicine demonstrates (Passos 1924). She attempted to distance herself from this model as a way of negotiating her position and social standing in Portuguese urban society. I will return to this point in the following chapter concerning the experience of educated women as primary teachers.

Women's right to vote was even more difficult. Political rights were viewed as important, but the republican-feminists declared, in their first negotiations with the new-born republican government, that political rights would be dealt with later, because they did not want to disrupt the republican struggle against the monarchy and the Church. Their struggle for the vote was such a sensitive area that republican feminists tended to see it as secondary to main republican aims. Ana Osório told the women factory workers of Setúbal, who were striking, that they needed to join women's associations "because before you are workers, you are already women". She added: "Only when we are completely impotent to force the Republic to grant what is our

right, only then should we open hostilities, without mercy" (Osório 1911b:8-9). There was a widespread view that political rights should be won, but that this would be the product of evolution, rather than revolution.

However, when approaching the time when the Chamber of Deputies was going to debate women's vote (already approved in the Senate), and also after the defeat of the project of women's right to vote by the Chamber of Deputies in 1913, the feminist emphasis on the vote became more central. It was stressed that the feminist propaganda for the vote should be able to transmit the idea to the Portuguese people that "the meaning of universal does not consist only of a male reality" (Osório 1915:61). At one point, many of the feminists accepted women's right to vote on the restricted basis of certification, as a preliminary strategy towards extending this to other women later. Another reason concerned the republican distrust of illiterate women - which many feminists shared - and their presumed subordination to the Catholic Church and local oligarchy. Even Maria Velleda, who resisted fiercely any restrictions on women's vote (indeed this was cause for disagreement between her and Ana Osório, for instance) accepted these restrictions, but only as a strategy, stressing that:

> (...) in such a backward society as ours, hostile to anything which is going to change conventional life, any movement in favour of the feminist ideal must be considered as progress and is not to be despised (Velleda 1912).

The League faded away, particularly weakened between 1915 and 1919. However, women's struggle for the vote continued with other organisations, such as the *National Council of Portuguese Women*. Its first Congress, referred to above - the

Feminist and Educational Congress - was intended to be the "key with which we will open the doors of parliament to our activity"[13]. Its President, a more pro-republican feminist, Adelaide Cabete, claimed that women's vote was more a means than an end in itself. It was a useful way of moralising social life, through the "protection of childhood, social hygiene, the amelioration of economic life, and the abolition of laws permitting prostitution" because this would be the aim of women's intervention in Parliament (Cabete 1923:33). The vote was not incompatible with the domestic duties of women; on the contrary, as housewives, women could better serve the nation, bringing women's issues to Parliament to be debated. Moreover, women in politics were a means of counterbalancing "man's instinct of domination, moderating his selfishness, (...) acting as a mirror, revealing that other beings exist on the earth - women" (Cabete 1925:50).

A more sophisticated view was supported by the lawyer Aurora C. Gouveia. In the opening of the *Feminist and Educational Congress*, in 1924, she focused feminism on the question of women's rights and democracy, revealing her project of modernity for Portugal. She argued in favour of a democratic Republic, stressing that this could only be achieved when democracy was constructed not only within the State, but also in the 'workplace' and the family. At certain points, her argument appears close to the contemporary analysis of Bowles and Gintis (1986) in *Democracy and Capitalism*, or Sousa Santos (1991), considering the family, the workplace, and the state, as all-important sites for the achievement of democracy and social and political rights. Like

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[13] *Alma Feminina*, 1923 (11-12), p.58.

Pateman's argument (1992:223), Gouveia was also clear about the crucial importance for democracy of the very different ways in which women and men were incorporated as citizens. She stressed that because women had obtained equality in the family, the time had come for its extension into the 'citizenplace':

> Outside the family, democracy, under the influence of the ideals of freedom and equality, is also constructing new habits and laws, which secure the rights of the city for women, in the same form as for men (Gouveia 1924:68).

Her discourse, however, appears to fall into the trap of using the language of legal reform when considering social and political change for democracy. For instance, she argues that with the new republican laws, women were already equal to men in the family, since they were granted equal rights regarding children and their own status as citizens in the family; but in doing so, she omitted the whole question of the subordinate situation of women vis-a-vis their husbands within marriage where men were deemed responsible for economic matters.

Other feminist sectors, not affiliated to the above mentioned feminist associations, who were close to catholicism, also made their views known on women's issues. One of them was Emília S. Costa, who declared herself a catholic as well as a supporter of feminist ideas (but not a 'suffragette'). Similar views were held by others women writers such as Virginia C. Almeida (1913).

Belonging to traditional sectors of republican feminists, Costa strongly supported women's duties in the home. She stressed that:

> People should not worry in vain: women will stay at home whenever possible because this is their natural disposition.

> Their sedentariness fits in with their special physical make-up (Costa 1923b:39).

She was clearly supporting the notion of 'woman's nature' which was seen as more suited to domestic duties. Costa stressed that they constituted the 'natural mission' of women. In her view, this was "imposed by God". It was because of this divine attribution that women were physically weak and had to suffer the (albeit gratifying) pains of maternity. However, at the same time they possessed great sensitivity and spirituality which were a compensation for their "inability to rise to the pinnacles of genius" (Costa 1923b:57). But women were not "beings short of ideas" as Schopenhauer contended. If society claimed that women were the best educators, it should grant them the respect and approval of their femininity (Costa 1922:11).

Women's work outside the home was particularly justified for those who were not able to find the necessary support for living:

> Able to work and provide a living for herself, she will only accept male support when she is committed to the man through love. In that case, she will quickly enjoy her home. If the husband is able to provide for the living of the family, she will be a dedicated housewife without feeling devalued (Costa 1923b:39).

If women had to earn a living, they should only pursue activities seen as "suitable for their own sex". Some such activities might be as shop assistants in fashion stores, or in bakeries (selling pastries), thus replacing men. Men had all the physical energies to be employed in other activities: it was a "shameful loss of energies and activities, harmful to the community, [that men practice them]" (Costa 1922:124). Women as tram drivers, as in Oporto, were unacceptable:

> This activity clashes with women's fragility. They are unattractive in their old-fashioned raincoats, their hair

> hidden in masculine caps, which grant them an air of permanently masked women. They are constantly climbing and going down the tramways in movement, and in that way they lose the grace of their gestures and language as a result of constant contact with the coarseness of the public (1923b:39).

Along the same line of argument, politics should not be of concern to women. This would lead to women's devaluation. Any intervention in politics was only justified when they were heads of household. Husbands and fathers should be in charge of public issues - for mothers and daughters, their lives should be devoted to the issues of their homes, to the "interior world" (Costa 1923b).

Therefore, what we find in this catholic-feminist perspective, that was different from the more widely accepted republican-feminist views, was mainly its emphasis on divine law and female nature. The language of women's rights was less prominent. However, in other matters, Costa was a supporter, against her own Church, of divorce and other changes republicanism had brought into the family and women's situation.

With the emergence of the Military Dictatorship, feminist voices expressed themselves less easily. The *National Council of Portuguese Women* promoted its last Congress in 1928 (Silva 1983). The hostility of political conditions were increasingly felt. Lamy (1935) has pointed to an increasing hostility regarding, in particular, the issue of women's work outside the home. Women, in her view, wanted to be considered to be equal to men, and no more the "unnoticed housekeeper, with a subordinate position". The situation of subordination was even mentioned as "the state of domestic slavery (...) in which women are oppressed by domestic duties and their lives are chained to the kitchen and children" (1935:4). They wanted to be "partners in struggles and work"

(ibidem:3). At the same time as such language was produced (using words such as 'slavery', 'oppression', 'chains'), other voices were struggling already with the question of equality and difference regarding the changing of women's lives. Cândida Ferreira (1935), probably as a consequence of the frequent criticisms against feminists, who were perceived as attempting to immitate male culture, distanced herself from what was called *masculinisation* . It was not this that women were striving for, she argued, when refusing their subordinate situation in Portuguese society. What women needed was to develop their own potentialities and 'natural abilities' and to correct 'negative' traits (such as "hysteria"). Hence, it was clear for Ferreira that women and men had different 'natural abilites' which should influence the organisation of social life. Her views probably found little echo in other forms of feminism for she stressed that feminists needed to be concerned with difference, with their own potentiaties. This was not an appeal to put aside the issue of women's rights. Ferreira was very much concerned with women's economic, political and social autonomy.

It is curious to note that some feminists, among either the more pro-republican or pro-catholic, praised the Republic for granting women extended civil rights (Cabete 1924; Costa 1923), when possibly a more critical stance could have been expected. This can probably be explained as a strategy that feminists used, once again, in order to achieve a better situation for negotiating the boundaries of the space where they could assert their views on feminism. In fact, and this is an important point to make, it is pretty clear that feminists, in their writings, were struggling all the time to define what was feminism. They often defended it

against accusations of being an immitation of "men's vices", and against *masculinisation*, albeit this was stressed with different emphasis by the various tendencies (Costa 1923; Cabete 1924; Gouveia 1925; Ferreira 1935).

. Catholic and other traditional views on women's role

Catholic sectors supported the basic consensus about women's main duties in the home. It comprised all the rhetorical arguments of a true and great mission for women within the home (for instance, Sá 1912; Cunha 1916).

The most entrenched Catholic writers emphasised that it was the Catholic Church which contributed most to the dignity of women, praising their status as wives and mothers, as their real 'mission'. However, in fact, the perspectives supported by the Church on these matters went further. As Mary Daly notices (1969), at the end of the nineteenth century, Pope Leon XIII produced several documents, attempting to confront the persistent conflict in catholic perspectives that women were made in the image of God whereas at the same time they were considered as inferior beings. In several enciclicae (*Quod Apostilici Muneris*, 1878, *Arcanum Divinae*, 1880, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891), the Pope underlined that women needed to be subordinated to men. The husband was the head of the family, like Christ was the head of the Church. At the same time, women were said (once again) to be the partners of men in the family. Women's nature was suitable for household duties and they should dedicate their lives to the well-being of their families (Daly 1969: 75). These were therefore, the

main positions of the head of the Church that Catholics in Portugal had to guide them in their reflexion and action regarding women's situation in society. To say that women were partners of their husbands, but at the same time, obliged to submit themselves to their will, consisted, as Daly underlines, in a noticeable contradiciton (ibidem:76).

One Portuguese writer, Gonçalves Cerejeira, was a member of the right-wing youth organisation at Coimbra University, CADC (Catholic Centre of Christian Democracy) and published several articles in its journal where he explained how Canonic law devised women's situation and mission in society. (Later, during the dictatorship, he became the archbishop of Portugal and a close friend and ally to Salazar). There were two main assumptions in Catholic legal regulations regarding family life, which were: "subordination to hierarchy and equality regarding duties" (Cerejeira 1922:193). These applied to women Cerejeira stressed in such an explicit way that no doubts could remain of the real subordination of women in Catholic thought:

> If the subordination to hierarchy grants men the privilege of being heads of the household, strengthening the family, equality of duties gives to women the same dignity as to men. The first is based on the best interest for the family; the second bases itself on identity with nature. The subordination of women is not incompatible with the recognition of women's dignity. The Canonic Law states fiercely the first, stressing at the same time the second - and this has been a considerable revolution (Cerejeira 1922:193).

Nature was in fact, very much involved in explanations for women's subordination, that is, using the writer's words, women's social position was to be framed according to their "identity with nature".

Other traditional sectors also emphasised the presumed fragile nature of women. From a male perspective, women's

subordination was stressed with regard to their sexual lives. Women could be angels, living honest lives, loyal to their husbands. However they were always dependent upon the sexual appetites or drives of men who were able to lead them astray from their honourable lives:

> Women's triumph or misfortune [of their honest lives] always depends more on the men they meet than on themselves. (...) If they meet a decent man, they are saved; but if he is a sordid one, they are lost. Women are only what we [men] want of them (Dantas 1916:89)

M. Amália Carvalho was another well-known conservative voice, at the turn of the century, whose views I have reviewed extensively (chapter 4). She also produced her views during republican times in books and magazines. Her first publication after the onset of the Republic consisted in a rejection of democracy because clearly democracy constituted a threat to owners of property (1913:55). Further, it was rejected because women were unable to find, in this form of politics, the conditions in which they had been able to live in aristocractic times. As a monarchist, she regretted the disappearance of the symbol of the queen, which, in her view, gave to women the capacity of political representation. The Republic took away from women "the mission of charitable activities, the mission of educator, the representative mission" (Carvalho 1913:56). What the Republic gave to women was less good: they could only be civil servants, earning much less than men "who oblige her [to work under the worst conditions], who neither respect nor revere her, seeing her only as an unsuitable competitor, who does much the same work, but earns less" (ibidem:57).

However, in the book she wrote in 1920 she changed some of her views. Women's struggle for winning the vote was still criticised, because, among other things, it would not change women's situation dramatically. At the same time, she continued to speak mainly the language of morals: for instance, women, she lamented, were appearing as novelists writing about improper situations which were the cause of shame. However, she was sympathetic now with some of the claims feminism was advancing (women as tutors of their own children and able to dispose of their salaries without their husbands' interference, see Carvalho 1920:145-6) and even demonstrated some admiration for the fervent agitation of English women in politics. But then her disagreement was with Portuguese feminists who she saw as politically "fanatical" and "sectarian" (ibidem:152).

After the Military Dictatorship was established, the voices of Catholic writers on women's situation increased in number. They were once again guided by the publication of the 'papal encyclical'. Pio XI wrote *Divini Illius Magistri* (1929) and it is clear from what he said that women, given their nature, were not to be considered as equal to men. They were seen to be in a situation of subordination to their husbands. The same line of argument was maintained in his subsequent encyclical, *Casti Connubi* (1930), where he clearly condemned women's emancipation by pointing out that only "bad educators" were supporting equal rights for women. He also suggested that women's work outside the home resulted in neglect of their family needs.

Some of the writers who supported Catholic views were organised around the CADC (Academic Centre of Christian

Democracy), mentioned earlier, and wrote for its journal. Surprisingly, those who wrote just prior to the military coup, spoke a language of women's rights: women had a right to a proper education and even to work outside the home. However, the line of argument changed in the articles which followed, to speak of the need to preserve family life in a context of women's subordination.

One of the writers was Costa Pimpão (1926). He gave conferences for the CADC, in 1926, which were later published in the journal. Feminism, he stated, was a movement which aimed to get men to recognise that women had rights as human beings. Women were feeling oppressed under "virile autocracy". A Christian person could not support the denial of these rights: this would be vile. Women's revolt against "virile despotism" was righteous since men were blocking women from "their legitimate and natural desire to make a living for themselves" (Pimpão 1926:506). He went on questioning the wider assumption that women were born to be wives and mothers. "What would we say if we stated that men were born to be husbands and fathers?" (ibidem:507). He also underlined that (i) reason had no sex; (ii) women were, albeit in a distinct way, as clever as men; (iii) women's education was to blame concerning their "inferiority". In the second article, even though he maintained an historical explanation for women's subordination, he changed his arguments criticising women who were much too erudite, who knew too much and were showing off their knowledge. The topic of *Les Précieuses Ridicules* (by Mollière) belonging to patriarchal latin mythology, since at least the end of the nineteenth-century, was surely an influence on him. He could go on repeating Cavaleiro de Oliveira's sexist sentence that: "knowldege for women should be used in the

same way as salt in the kitchen - in the right measure" (ibidem:555). In the third article, after quoting Pope XI saying that women had a right to make a living, he twisted his arguments even further, starting to emphasise that feminism could only attain its aims through "charity" and should not attempt to base itself in profane and secular regulations. Women should have the right to vote but they were compelled to obey the Catholic Church and be submissive to their husbands:

> When the Church asks for women's obedience, it is not to subordinate them to their husbands, but precisely to grant this small monarchy, the family, the best means for being able to obtain eternal divine grace. (...) In the Christian home, obedience is sweet. (...) Harmony does not exclude hierarchy. (...) Subordination and the hierarchy of power must subsist. Where there is no power, there is no government, where there is no government, there is no order (Pimpão 1926:827-8).

This stretching of the argument to combine women's rights and women's subordination in the family appears significant of the effort that the Catholic right-wing was making to attract university students to its side. It used a strategy which stressed, at first, the fairness of granting women their rights, thus, at first sight, appearing as non-conservative and non traditionalist, and probably as an alternative to the disorganised republican politics and cultural life of the time. These conferences were produced, in fact, in the midst of a quite uncertain political context, in the same year as the military coup. It seems that the Catholic right-wing movement was successful in the following years gaining larger audiences. The appeal to 'law and order', in the last article is significant of the changes which were operating in Portuguese society at the time, more in tune with the expansion of conservative far-right wing policies in the country, and indeed in most parts of Europe.

Some years later, the right-wing discourse on women was more coherent according to its own traditional lines of argument. Vale, writing in 1934, in the same journal, was no longer talking about women's rights. He acknowledged the big changes that Portuguese society had suffered in recent years, pushing women to work outside the home. However, this was considered "ruinous" to the family and caused "an infinite social disturbance". The effects of women's work were various (some appearing quite contradictory to one another). They were competing with men, contributing to greater competitiveness in the 'workplace', the lowering of salaries and the increase in unemployment. Secondly, women working outside their homes were exposed to the "temptations of urban life", fragile and inexperienced as they were - hence they could easily become prostitutes. Thirdly, their children were abandoned, without the vigilance and protection of parents leading them to a future life of "crime" and "vice". Fourthly, in the context of "revolutionary communism", which was trying to attract marginalised and unemployed men, women working outside the home were also contributing to the expansion of this political and social "danger", which it was necessary to oppose (see Vale 1934:205ss). Fifthly, "female professionalism" (meaning the deep involvement of women in 'mental work' outside the home) was harmful for women themselves, because, with a diploma, they would become dissatisfied with marriage and domestic life:

> Mental work and academic life give women a second nature, which clearly de-feminises them, taking away from them feminine qualities. It is probably the result of the rule of reason over feelings, the acquired habit of reflection over natural spontaneity (Vale 1934:266).

Therefore the best thing that a married professional woman could do was to leave her job (as a doctor, a lawyer, an engineer, a secondary teacher) because, surely, domestic duties, the education of her children, and "everything which constitutes the perfect management of the home is not compatible with any other occupation" (Vale 1934:216).

The educational conservative press expressed itself on the subject. Feminism was accused of "invading" sectors of employment which had nothing to do with the womanly nature. They were competitors of men in the 'workplace', causing the unemployment of their male counterparts (Viana 1927b). Many of them were working only for luxuries and for fashion. Consequently, they were degrading themselves and "forgeting their duties as wives, mothers and housekeepers" (ibidem). Clearly, in this perspective, such moral corruption of women was caused by a republican education which had allowed them the same freedom as boys (Viana 1927a). The family was demoralised, and homes were being dissolved. Women, in Viana's view, were the first to support "moral degradation" (Viana 1927c). Thus, there was assumed a need to control women in order to restrict them socially and morally. Other articles by the editors of *Educação Nacional* maintained such perspectives. Women and their families were morally degraded, there was too much freedom. Free love, modern dances, "negro fashions", night clubs, "the artistic nude and everything which pleases Russia" constituted such freedom. Women were the "best propagandists of Russian beliefs"[14].

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[14] *A Educação Nacional*, 1, 2nd phase (11), 15 May 1927; (39), 27 November 1927; (40), 4 December 1927; II, 2nd phase (87), 28 October 1928; IV, 2nd phase (167), 11 May 1930; (203), 25 January 1931; XXX (24), 7 August 1932.

Other writers echoed this basic consensus: work outside the home was only justified in the very special cases already mentioned. Pedro Cunha, an inspector of secondary teaching who wrote about girls' secondary education, stated that this was appropriate for single, widowed and the "less fortunate women":

> I am not opposed to a lady's work, if she has no one to support her and aims to work honestly to make a living for herself. (...) However, the woman who, without true need, works in occupations which are not those of her home, the great part of the day, necessarily neglects her domestic duties. If she has children, she has to hand them to mercenary people, with great risks for their development, especially their moral education. At the same time, she is probably stopping a head of household from getting a job. Nowadays, how many [men]are struggling with the difficulties caused by unemployment! It is already known that employers nowadays prefer women to men workers, because women are more flexible and are satisfied with a lower salary (Cunha 1934:16).

These perspectives on women's work outside the domestic sphere, framed by such restricted morality, are confirmed in a recent study: women's work was seen as a "negation of family tradition", as "women's desertion of the home". It was condemned because it was seen as contributing to the increase in men's unemployment, as overloading women (which was "inhuman") and as bringing into the home ideas which were corrupting family life (Baptista 1986:210).

To sum up, we may say that these outpourings in the Catholic right-wing journal *Estudos*, as well as in the educational conservative press, were significant of the moves and changes regarding the 'images of femininity' in expansion, in the first part ot the 1930s. The republican discourses on women's rights - which, as seen above, maintained unmistakeable amibiguities - were fading away. The consensus around women's main duties as

wives, mothers and housekeepers continued dominant from the republican years throughout the Military Dictatorship (see also Silva 1926), and made its way into the 'Estado Novo'. In this sense, regarding women's duties, the 'Estado Novo' did not constitute a break with the Republic. Nevertheless, the emphasis on 'women's best place as in the home' was voiced more loudly and made more central to the specific regulations of the authoritarian State. This was sometimes matched with an emphasis on specific and unique feminine qualities. The concept of "compensation" devised by Barrett (1980) may have a special relevance here since it can be understood as an attempt to present "imagery and ideas that tend to elevate the "'moral value' of femininity" (1980:109) in a context of patriarchal relations. This emphasis on the 'moral value' of femininity is something that we also find at the end of the nineteenth-century and even during the republican period. However, within the context of an authoritarian State matched with the emphasis on the centrality of the family under the supervision of the male breadwinner, it contributes to make a clear contrast with the rhetoric on the 'moral value' of femininity. Is it possible to interpret the emphasis on the 'moral value of femininity' acted as a disguise for an increase in forms of male control over women?

The substitution of the republican (and feminist) notion of marriage as a contract by the emphasis on the family as a central institution was increasingly made. The family was the institution "which we fight for as it is the foundation stone of a well organized society" (*Salazar*, by A. Ferro, quoted in Mónica 1977:275). Indeed, the *1933 Constitution* stressed that the family was central to the 'Estado Novo' and women were to be defined within the State according to their 'nature' and their main duties

within the family. Salazar presented the family rhetorically as the most important organisation in future society:

> So we consider the regular existence of the worker's family as logical in social life and useful to the economy. The worker must support his own family. Married women at work, or even the single woman, should not be encouraged. A good housewife always has lots of things to do. Women do not understand that happiness cannot be reached through enjoyment but rather through renouncement. The big nations should set the example, keeping women at home. However, those nations seem to ignore the fact that the family will not be a solid institution if the woman goes out to work (quoted in Maria Belo *et al.* 1987: 266).

Luis Baptista analyses the values and images around the family in the 1930s and his conclusions confirm that more liberal ways of social life were substituted for by very rigid forms and values around the family. Family life encapsulated strong ideas on fecundity, and family continuity. Regarding women and men's roles, public authority, leadership and strength were male attributes, whereas women were in reality seen as those who were to remain subordinate within the home, concerned with domestic duties.

The emphasis on the family as central to the 'Estado Novo' and to Portuguese society as a whole, surely had important consequences. Women were inevitably caught up in more repressive 'images of femininity', and by more traditional forms of family life. Women could be defined as not having the same rights as men and as being more, from then onwards, a "*socia subordinata* " (Mónica 1977:275). This does not mean that legal regulations concerning women were irretrievably lost. Women did not, in fact, lose the legal rights they had won during the Republic. As already pointed out, a restricted number of women even won the right to vote in 1931. However, the emphasis on 'family life' and women's instrumental qualities (meaning their subordination to such life)

certainly had an effect on the construction and trajectories of women's lives. However, this subject has not yet been fully researched in Portugal. What evidence we have is made up of some studies focusing on the production of official discourses on the family and on women's duties in dictatorial times (Mónica 1977; Baptista 1986). Indeed, the effectiveness and reception of these discourses by the social sectors which they aimed to affect still needs careful attention.

To sum up this long section on the 'images of femininity' and on women's role, throughout what was a very unstable political period, it may be useful to stress the diversity which becomes apparent with regard to the ideological construction of women. In addition to the basic consensus on women as wives, mothers and housekeepers, new images of women as *citizens* emerged. Gender politics became an arena of heated debate. Even within left/leftist parties, the access of women to the 'workplace' and to the 'citizenplace', and the democratisation of the 'householdplace' were not consensual among their members and conservative views could be heard from within them on women's rights. The feminist movement was not able to gain wide acceptance and continued to show some contradictions, mainly of class and race. However, given the dominance of the conservative and traditional character of many sectors of Portuguese society, it struggled courageously for women's rights. Portuguese feminists (at least some of them) started to question the idea that equality did not mean to have access to a world constructed by male values.

It is now time to examine the debates around co-education and the contribution that they bring to an understanding

of the situation of women teachers working in this period of transition.

II - Girls' education: single-sex or co-educational schools?

In 1922, at a Congress of Teachers organised by the leftist teachers' journal *O Professor Primário*, one of the papers presented on women's education claimed that its aim was not to educate women in the same political and social terms as men: what was needed was an education for their "emancipation (sic) as wives, mothers and housekeepers" (Oliveira 1922). It was added further as clarification: "it is so nice to see how neat some women are, with their homes well kept and their children well cared for and robust. These women have been able to achieve all this through hard work and with little expense" (ibidem).

The concerns for women's education to regenerate society were also very strong during the republican period (see, for instance, Santos 1913; Cunha 1921; Martins 1921; Oliveira 1922; Reynaud 1925). Many expected that Portuguese society would find, via the role of women as educators and guardians of a strict morality, its way of confronting conflicting changes occurring in the daily life of the Republic. One author wrote, using hyperbolical language as was quite common in such matters, that:

> it is necessary to grant to women a solid moral education to enable them to understand clearly their duties in the home, to have a clear consciousness of their high social mission, a high notion of their beneficial action in the education of new generations (...) The great pedagogues, in the last centuries, have been concerned with women's education, to grant them a well guided 'integral education', *parce qu'elle a un mari à rendre heureux et des enfants à bien elever*, as Fénélon wrote (Mateus 1922, in french in the original).

Women's education for the regeneration of Portuguese society was justified mainly in two ways. On the one hand, there was the danger of a 'frivolous life' with women deeply involved in fashion, futilities, sports "inappropriate for the female sex", going to theatres, and other kinds of shows which consisted of fiction, not real life. This did not prepare women seriously for their increasingly complex duties in the home. A solid moral education was necessary in women's education (see Costa 1922, Oliveira 1923, for instance). On the other hand, the project of regeneration also ran through the ideas of the great and glorious past of the nation which mothers necessarily should be able to transmit to their children, particularly their *sons* (see Matos 1922, Miranda 1922b). Above all, the project of the regeneration of Portuguese society was certainly an attempt to strengthen family life, to give identity to the nuclear family which was gradually gaining firmer contours throughout the period.

Cristina Rocha (1991) underlines that the concern for the regeneration of Portuguese society through women's role was also a feature of the 'Estado Novo'. It was through women's role and their education that politicians and educators would attempt to confront the "problem of the unity of the social fabric" (Rocha 1991:66). They should have a role as moral guides and be granted appropriate knowledge to maintain a hygienic society. One educator wrote in 1934:

> In my view, women's education aims mainly to enable them to fulfil their mission as housekeepers, wives and mothers. As a good housekeeper, women need to have qualities of cleanliness, good taste and precaution, to have what many call the science of home economics. As wives, they need more than irreproachable behaviour, they need to be advisers and confidants to their husbands, being able to understand the business of their partners, and even to help them at certain times. (...) As careful mothers, they need to have the

> necessary knowledge of child care in the first years of life, and to instil in them the most noble feelings (Cunha 1934:24).

In part, it is because of the concern mentioned above that there were so many appeals, in the Republic, from different political and social traditions, for a 'vocational' education for girls. For some, this meant that the State should create schools where girls could learn the knowledge related to their duties in the household ('escolas domésticas', in french 'écoles ménagères'; see, for instance, Santos 1913; Oliveira 1922; Lemos1924[15]). For others, these 'vocational' schools should be concerned also with granting women an education adequate to their own *specificity* in the 'workplace' (nurses, governesses, hotel managers; see, for instance, Ribeiro 1926). One of these authors stressed that women needed to have "a special education as mothers and housekeepers, and a vocational educational as *social* beings" (Oliveira 1922, emphasis added). In his view, women in the 'householdplace' were unsocial beings, which probably meant that, as he assumed them as 'private' beings, they did not belong to the category of 'social'. "Vocational education" was then a means for women's entry into 'society'. This emphasis on 'vocational' schools is also worth noticing for other reasons. It confirms that there was a great accent on vocational educational policies in the last years of the republican regime, as previously emphasised (see chapter 6). It was expected that, through such 'vocationalism', more open opportunities for work would be granted for working-class and lower-middle class girls.

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[15] Even the anarchist newspaper *A Batalha* (The Battle) embraced sometimes such a perspective. See *A Batalha*, VII (2082), 13 September 1925.

Another point that needs to be stressed is that, at least from the perspective of conservative educators and politicians, women's education did not necessarily mean State education, with regard to the middle and upper-middle classes. Agostinho de Campos (1919) stressed that the State was not able to educate girls adequately. The State was a "mediocre educator everywhere (...) its only contribution has been to demoralise our children. We should not let it also pollute our daughters" (1919:101). In his view, it was fairly clear that the daughters of the "best families" which the Republican State was interested in attracting to a modern and non-religious lyceum education - oriented and controlled by its own officials - would not, in fact, attend, because their parents would not trust educators that were not of their own choice (Campos 1919:102).

Debates also began to focus, almost for the first time, on *women's right* to education and instruction, mainly through feminist voices, and through some male republican and anarchist perspectives. This meant that women's education was increasingly not supported in terms of instrumental ends but was struggled for as of *right*. Adolfo Lima was one of these voices, from the anarchist perspective, questioning the organic tie commonly assumed between physiological and social processes and, following Durkheim, stressing that education was a social process, aiming at turning a biological entity into a social being. Women should not expect that male power would grant them this right easily. They needed to struggle for it because "women's education - within a perspective of 'integral education' - can only be achieved if it is of their own making. The emancipation of women must necessarily come from their own initiative" (Lima 1925: 94). Using

a similar line of argument, Elina Guimarães, sometime after the military coup of 1926, emphasised women's education as their right and argued against restricted forms of education, promoting rather its extension. She feared that its reduction would mean less oportunities for women to expand their capacity for reflection and for developing habits of work (Guimarães 1927:352).

What became distinctively new regarding women's education, during the republican years and the beginning of the dictatorship, in particular between 1919-1927, was the debate around the kind of structure this education should adopt. As already stated, these dates mark the launching of co-educational primary schools and its end, respectively. Educators entered the debate in favour either of single-sex or co-educational schools. This proved to be a fervent discussion. Nevertheless, co-education or single-sex schools were discussed, at least from the start of the Republic. I will be reviewing, in the first place, the arguments against co-education and in favour of a *specificity* of girls' education, followed by the analysis of interventions in favour of co-education. These interventions were selected mainly in teachers' and education journals of different political and educational perspectives. Although I will concentrate in particular on the period mentioned before, some educators' positions and arguments, from the start of the Republic, will be mentioned.

. the 'battle' against co-education

Throughout the numerous issues of the teachers' journal *A Federação Escolar*, (The School Federation), there are quite a

number of articles on this matter, which probably demonstrates that republican educators were divided on the issue of co-education. One of the most curious is a pastoral letter of a 'well-known French bishop' (transcribed by a republican teacher, according to whom this perspective was similar to the conservative Portuguese clergy, banned by the Republic). The bishop condemned co-education in the name not only of sexual promiscuity but also because co-education hid a strategy "to demoralise our young generations". He also warned that the Church would not be able to admit children who attended co-educational schools[16] to first communion.

"Sexual promiscuity" was certainly an important argument used by the opponents of co-education. By this was meant licentious attitudes, and even thoughts between boys and girls that presumably would arise when taught in the same room and school. This was presented as ruinous to the morality of the younger generation (Henriques 1926). Girls, in particular, were in danger because they were to be confronted with boys' obscene language. Further, this caused confusion of sexual roles between men and women, and even gave rise to "physical and psychological deformations of individuals" (Artur 1922).

As could be expected, those who advocated an instrumental aim for women's education, such as the regeneration of Portuguese society and the consolidation of the family, were very much concerned with finding a *specificity* in women's education, as separate from male education. However, this was not an innovative process in the debate regarding women's identity. On

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[16] *A Federação Escolar*, I (14), 26 Mai, 1912. The name of the teacher was Aires de Carvalho.

the contrary, the *specificity* of women's education was bound to traditional and conservative views.

The majority of the opinions against co-educational schools claimed that it was unacceptable that girls were not taught needlework anymore. One of the authors, frequently expressing his views on this matter, was an inspector of primary education (Ramalho 1921a; 1921b). He expressed his sense of outrage that, in the State primary school of the most distant and remote villages, girls would learn notions about several world religions (which, in his view, were quite irrelevant), but were not taught the most necessary and practical things such as sewing and cutting a garment for their future husbands and children (Ramalho 1921a; 1921b). Girls lose their "qualities as wives and mothers" (Ramalho 1922). Instead, women were in danger of becoming pretentious and ridiculous. The disappearance of needlework from primary schools was a "pedagogical monstrosity" (ibidem). Other voices also stressed that co-educational schools contributed to the disappearance of skilled housewives (Campos 1919:115). Some inspectors of primary education wrote to education journals showing their concern on this matter[17]. There were also teachers, both men and women, supporting the need for girls to learn needlework. Some of them used this to justify their condemnation of co-education on the basis of popular opposition to schools not granting girls what they needed most for their future lives as housekeepers and mothers - i.e. needlework (Coimbra 1923; Ramalho 1923; Mendes 1924; Henriques 1926). Sometimes, home economics was also identified as lacking in the curriculum of

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[17] The inspectorate, in fact, had a meeting where they discussed this issue, mentioned in *O Professor Primário*, IV (121), 12 January.

these schools. It was said that, for this reason, school enrolments were dropping since parents preferred for their daughters to remain illiterate.[18]

Surely, even if this was not clearly assumed, class divisions were present in this debate. Needlework was probably the main subject perceived as essential to working-class girls' education (see, for instance, Ramalho 1921a). A woman teacher (who signed her article in an education journal with the initial "B.") stressed that "women [i.e working-class women] must be educated as housekeepers. Learning the humanities has no application in their future lives, and can even have a negative input, if it is not matched by learning manual and domestic virtues". She was even able to state, 'Tayloristically', how many meters of a hem of a garment a girl of 8 or 11 years old could achieve[19].

However, concerning other social classes, there was a fear that increasingly women were subjected to a process of "masculinisation" through schooling: "we have neither true housekeepers nor even servants to do the domestic services", claimed a well-known male educator of the "New Education" movement, Álvaro V. Lemos. In his view, co-educational schools were responsible for the uniformity between women and men:

> Tomorrow all women will be intellectuals, civil servants, shop assistants, competing in a frightening way with men. There will be no more sweet homes or quiet family life. Everything will be turning round, in an uniform and mechanised urban life, in constant and hectic agitation and speed. The two sexes will be almost identical, united in the

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[18] Many of these arguments were debated in the 1922 Teachers' Congress, which met at Coimbra. See *Escola Moderna*, II (71), p. 3. The same educational journal echoed the same topics in 1927, See *Escola Moderna*, VII (326), 24 July & (361), 1 April.

[19] The article is entitled "O Ensino dos Lavores" (The Teaching of Needlework) and appeared in *Revista Escolar*, 3 (9), November 1923.

> same trivial aspirations of pleasure and affluence. (...) This is our present and tragic crisis of the home. There is no true home economics. Children are raised carelessly. There is neither order nor cleanliness in family life. There is no knowledge of either sewing or cooking. We do not raise dedicated servants. We do not know how to promote either modest joy or comfort in the home. (...) There are no housekeepers. There are no domestic servants! And this state of affairs pervades our lives of infinite and small unhappinesses and discomforts (Lemos 1924:21-4).

Presumably, Lemos was writing in the name of the urban middle-classes, and in particular, of their male members - at least, this is a possible interpretation for the possessive 'we' he is using so often. The curious thing regarding Álvaro Lemos was that he was an active and militant member of teachers' organisations (see Nóvoa 1987; 1990). From this, we can gain a sense of the deep gender and class contradictions in which people such as himself were involved. Clearly, as the anarchist Emílio Costa stated (1928), to be leftist (at least as traditionally understood) did not mean necessarily that people would be radical in matters related to gender.

After the military coup of 1926, the language of morality was heard with an increasing intensity. The editor of *O Professor Primário*, once a leftist teachers' journal, stated that "education given in state schools should be pure and perfect. (...) The two sexes need to be educated with respect and modesty. And education cannot be purified if children are put in direct contact daily, learning a freedom that will easily prevail". Sexual drives developed in puberty and could develop in an uneven way. Co-education, in his view, could even lead to an increase in prostitution (Nunes 1927). In parallel, some voices advised of the danger co-education represented to the "reproduction of the human species", since both sexes would become increasingly identical and

would lose the power of attracting each other (Artur 1927). As a consequence - and the author quoted Stanley Hall - the number of marriages decreased, because girls were negligent in their manners towards boys, and boys, in their turn, felt less constrained with girls. Clearly, in the view of this male teacher, this was obnoxious.

However, the great champion against co-education was the conservative educational journal *A Educação Nacional* (The National Education), which published articles almost in every issue, between 1927 and 1929 with the intention of demolishing co-education. The language used was plenty of terms considering co-education as a "true crime" (Queirós 1927a), a form of "alive pornography" (Queirós 1927b), a "black spot polluting school life" (Queirós 1927c), "a cancer, origin of depravation and source of the worst poison and worst imorality"[20], "a moral disorder"[21], a "brothel"[22], "a harem"[23] etc. Co-education would surely lead to free love and both were a bolchevick heritage expanding quickly (Queirós 1927d;1927e). In consequence, the Fatherland was threatened[24]. Girls in a short time would have to carry with them a revolver to defend themselves from boys' attacks, presumably such were the messages that co-education would pass to boys (ibidem). The government was applauded for ending with co-education, as an "agent of moralisation"[25]. Catholics were in the forefront, claimed

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20 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (14), 5 June 1927; also (15), 12 June.

21 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (15), 12 June 1927.

22 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (17), 26 June 1927.

23 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (12), 22 May 1927.

24 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (15), 12 June 1927; (16), 19 June 1927; (36), 6 November 1927; (46), 15 January 1928; (51), 19 February 1928.

25 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (17), 26 June 1927.

this journal, fighting against the evil of co-education[26]. Primary teachers were perceived as prone to comunist ideas and hence to co-education. Presumably many of them followed the example of the other teacher who was suspiciously accused of the worst crimes: "important documents of a primary teacher, who previously visited Russia and wrote revolutionary books, were found"[27]. Even inspectors were accused of giving support to co-education[28]. Therefore the editors of *The National Education* advised the Secretary of State of pursuing the 'moral' solution already announced - and only implemented in the towns - which was to extend firmly the separation of sexes to the almost totality of schools in the country[29]. Furthermore, each sex should be taught by a teacher of the same sex[30], and thus it was possible to avoid the problem of sexual abuse from men teachers of girls[31].

The attack from *A Educação Nacional* was so strong and vociferous that we can get a sense that there was a battle around gender issues, and more precisely around co-education, seen as pivotal to the reconstitution of social and ideological (and political) groups which the Republic put at risk. The language of a very strict morality which from time to time expresses a perceived fear of bolchevism was used.

The awkwardness in dealing with the physical and psychological nature of both sexes was another line of attack

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26 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (39), 27 November 1927.

27 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (43), 25 December 1927.

28 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (51), 19 February 1928.

29 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (33), 16 October 1927; (36), 6 November 1927; (43) 25 December 1927; (44), 1 January 1928; (60), 22 April 1928; (107), 17 March 1929; (110), 7 April 1929.

30 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (45), 8 January 1928.

31 Another educational journal *Escola Moderna* (The Modern School) mentions the name of the male teacher who sexually abused several girls in two primary schools at Lisbon (Escola Moderna, IX (432), 9 March 1930.

against co-education. This criticism was also stated after the mlitary coup of 1926. The argument developed in the following way: women were physically fragile as proven by scientific data. Too much mental work was harmful for them. Hence, in co-educational schools, one of two things had to be done: either the process of teaching and learning had to be slowed down to adapt to the needs of the female sex or girls would be mentally exhausted (Faria 1927; Nunes 1927; Costa 1927). Whilst some did not accept the presumed fragility of the female sex, they nevertheless accepted that the different nature of the two sexes implied a separate organisation of social life, including education (Tomás 1927).

From this argument, it was not apparently difficult to stress that the negative contribution of co-education would extend well beyond the school walls, thus emphasising its harmful character to the nation:

> Nations will be so much stronger and more conscious whenever their elements have the qualities which distinguish men and women in their specific functions. It is because of this that I am hostile to effeminate men and 'masculinised' women. (..) Clearly, it is to this state of affairs that co-education is leading us (Faria 1927).

Clearly, gender roles were fixed and the school needed to conform to them. Along the same line of argument as at the end of the nineteenth century (reviewed in chapter 4), scientific evidence was presented, emphasising that the difference between the two sexes in biological terms had to have effects in social life. There was a clear opposition to co-education perceived as an attempt to erase biological and social differences. However, it was probably more than this, as has been emphasised several times in this thesis: the attempts to change the content of patriarchal relations

met fierce opposition. The debates on co-education appear to illustrate it.

. the support for co-education

The supporters of co-education came from different political and educational perspectives, but at least there was a common trait among them: they were very much concerned with social change and perceived the school as an important means of obtaining greater equality for women. Sectors of republicans and anarchists as well as feminists, in general, endorsed it. Teachers and educators wrote to education journals, supporting co-education. The support was mainly given between 1919-1921 and later, around 1927, when the decree ending co-education was published. It is curious to notice that the majority of articles in favour of co-education were published mainly in the leftist teachers' journal *O Professor Primário* (The Primary Teacher). As already stated, it was a journal where republican and anarchists sectors expressed their views. Another education journal, *A Federação Escolar* (The School Federation) also published their articles, albeit to a less extent. It is also important to stress that, in 1927, although the censorship of the Military Dictatorship was already established, educators were still able to present their views in defence of co-education.

The very meaning of co-education was not homogeneous among its supporters. If, for some, it meant the same education for boys as for girls, concerning the curriculum, spaces, educative agents, preparing each sex to practice any occupation (see Lima 1925, for instance), for others, clearly it should maintain the area of 'craft shops activitites' as different for each sex. Some of the

latter also agreed with the disposition that younger children should be taught by a woman teacher, and the older ones, by a man. However, this was criticised by the opposite perspective, seeing this as conflicting with the precepts of co-education. The decree which established co-education in primary schools can be seen as a compromise with the second perspective, since the regulations regarding the curriculum and educative agents restricted a 'purer' concept of co-education.

That equality between men and women was one of the aims for co-education can be best seen in an article by Sousa Vairinho (1919). He stated that the co-educational school would be able to bring the two sexes to "a reciprocal equality of citizenship" (see also Serrão 1920). Another male teacher stressed that it was important for girls to receive an education that enable them to become independent, similar to boys, and not to be compelled to accept marriage as the only solution (Sousa 1922).

Other educators writing to teachers' journals justified co-education because it was a 'natural' process since boys and girls were not separated in other areas of their lives (Matos 1919; also Serrão 1920 & 1923; Coimbra 1926). It was stressed that it was contradictory to accept co-education in lyceums, universities, and other schools and to deny it in primary schools. In other social situations, such as the 'workplace', for instance, both sexes were together. Moreover, both sexes would in this way lose their morbid curiosity for 'matters of sex'. Each would be prepared to see the 'opposite sex' without the constraints set by social conventions (Santos 1921; Pereira 1922; Dias 1926). The final remarks from a teachers' congress, held in 1920, and supporting co-education unanimously, stressed this same argument: "Nature does not

separate individuals according to their sexes, instead it establishes divergencies and incompatibilities within the same sex. In that way, it prepares the formation of couples or of reproductive families".[32] Moreover, the co-educational school could be "a perfect imitation of the family (...) consisting of all the elements that constitute a well organised and oriented family. (...) Generally it consists of the father, the mother, sons and daughters". What distinguished the co-educational school from the family was the existence of "directors with the necessary qualifications to manage, ameliorate and complete the education children receive from their parents" (Figueira 1920). Further, this argument in favour of co-education was extended, and seen as contributing to strengthen family life, through a better acquaintance of boys and girls in the classroom as well as the best qualities each sex would gain one from the other. Boys would lose their aggresiveness, winning "delicacy and affection, and leaving aside the ridiculous role of D. Juan". Girls would gain "courage, sharing the same games as boys (...) gaining some virility to strengthen their character", putting a stop to their frivolities and fussiness (Costa, A *et al.* 1921).

When, in 1927, the decree abolishing co-education in State primary schools was published, several teachers wrote to education journals, underlining their support for co-education and adding their criticisms for its ending (see, for instance, Dias 1927; Belo 1927; Dionísio 1927; Domingues 1927; Melo 1927; Frias 1927). A young woman teacher even stated she had the feeling that, if an inquiry was carried out, "all teachers would come out in

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[32] Quoted from *Actas das Sessões do Congresso Extraordinário da União do Professorado Primário* (1920).

favour of co-education" (Trindade 1927). In 1933, still some voices were heard in support for co-education[33].

There were several lines of argument to demonstrate that co-education should continue. Firstly, the reduced costs that co-education represented were emphasised in terms of teaching time since only one teacher was needed to teach boys and girls at the same time. Furthermore - and this was an argument that some teachers used - in rural schools, co-education represented the possibility of working in a more comprehensive way with pupils sometimes absent from school due to domestic or farming activities. The teacher could adapt better teaching time to the irregularity of their attendance (Almeida 1927b).

Secondly, they addressed issues of morality, putting into question the morbid accusations voiced by *A Educação Nacional*, mentioned above (Almeida 1927a). The issue of sexual harassment and abuse of girls by male teachers was speciallty addressed. In several articles, there are allusions to a history of sexual abuse from a male teacher towards girls in a village. Those who opposed co-education used this story to strengthen their moral condemnation of it. The teachers who supported co-education questioned this argument on the basis that "a sporadic case of a pathological order, an inherited degeneration" could not be used for its condemnation (Belo 1927; also Faria 1927; Trindade 1927). The teachers of the *União do Professorado Primário* (Primary Teachers Union), who were still able to hold their Congress at Viseu in 1927, also protested against the accusation that co-education presented an opportunity for such cases. The teachers reacted

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33 See, for instance, *A Federação Escolar*, VI (5th phase) (301), 13 December 1933.

against the accusations which were a "dishonour" for the profession[34]. And Álvaro V. Lemos, who was part of the New Education movement, mentioned above, wrote also an article in the anarchist newspaper *A Batalha* (The Battle), criticising right-wing sectors of using such a case for appealing to end co-education. He analysed the perspective of the sectors supporting the Catholic Church, which defended the separation of the sexes and accused them of "simulation and false virtue" and of manoeuvring to put an end to co-education. The sectors supporting co-education were "the liberals, conscious and cultivated (...) following the guidelines of scientific, rational and modern pedagogics" (Lemos 1926).

Thirdly, co-education was supported as an important element of 'integral education' and the 'comprehensive school' ('escola única') an "ideal that should guide all educators in search of social improvement". This position was defended by another Teachers' Association, the *Associação dos Professores de Portugal* (Portuguese Teachers' Association), which expressed its disapproval for the end of co-education, in much the same terms as the New Education Movement[35].

Fourthly, - and reproducing the 'naturalist' argument - it was argued that co-education enabled the school to reproduce the family model. Each sex could gain a better aquaintance with the other as well as pool its best qualities. This would contribute to a homogeneity between the two sexes[36]. One commentator argued

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34 1st session of *União do Professorado Primário*' Congress, Viseu 1927, (the speaker was Rui Martins) quoted in *O Professor Primário*, VIII (389), 29 May. See also the article "A Coeducação", by the editors of the education journal *A Federação Escolar*, 15, 3rd phase, 27 October 1926 and I, 4th phase, (41), 18 June 1927.

35 Resolution from the *Associação dos Professores Primários*, quoted in *O Professor Primário*, IX (400), 14 August 1927.

36 Resolution of the National Council of Portuguese Women, quoted in *O Professor Primário*, IX (400), 14 August 1927.

that the school "should prepare for life", reflecting the organisation of social life without supporting "anti-progressive prejudices which promote the increasing antagonism of the two sexes" [37].

Fifthly, the issue of equality of opportunity for girls was invoked. Feminist organisations criticised the re-establishment of the regime of separation of sexes in primary schools. The National Council of Portuguese Women (*Conselho Nacional das Mulheres Portuguesas*) wrote to the Minister for 'Instruction', arguing that it was as a result of the regime of separation of sexes that women suffered prejudices as a result of their supposed mental inferiority and "which enslaved them as well as blocked their collaboration in the construction of civilisation". Girls were just as intelligent as boys, and as a consequence, able to succeed in schools, alongside boys. The co-educational school would restore women their dignity. They would no longer be considered as objects of embellishment. The educator Álvaro V. Lemos argued the same way in 1931, criticising conservative sectors for attempting to block women's emancipation with the end of co-education. As he stressed: "[these sectors] want women confined to the three KKKs, as in the old Germany (...) or as sad dolls in a state of golden slavery, ignoring life and realities" (Lemos 1931).

. some points for further elaboration

It may be said that co-education in Portugal had political connotations, in the sense that fractions of political movements,

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37 Resolution from the *Associação dos Professores Primários*, quoted in *O Professor Primário*, IX (400), 14 August 1927.

such as the republican, anarchist and feminist, supported it and struggled for it against other political fractions. The Portuguese case appears as distinct from the English, where, as Brehony (1984) emphasises, the arguments for co-education came from a cultural perspective, which could be called 'alternative', deriving from specific sectors of the middle classes (the 'progressives'). It was associated with "crankiness, sandals, fresh air and vegetarianism" and the "breaking down of barriers to individual self-development and liberty of expression" (Brehony 1984:3). The features Brehony points out were also present in Portuguese society (for instance, there were pro-naturalist groups and vegetarianism, and some republicans were also collaborators in their journals) although almost certainly with less intensity than in England. Further, in Portugal, co-education took on a more politicised form and appeared less related to 'alternative' movements.

What is also interesting in the debate around co-education is that both views - pro-co-education and pro-single-sex schools - used arguments anchored in 'nature'. Fractions of educators were able to find, in the existence and organisation of "nature", arguments to fight against co-education: the sexes were naturally different, therefore social life, including formal education, needed to be organised according to the 'natural' specificity of each sex. The supporters of co-education also argued for the construction of social life in terms of proximity to 'natural' life, without artifice which would contribute to constrain and obstruct self-development.

To conclude this section on the debates on co-education, it may be argued that they revealed that the changes in women's

situation - albeit small and slow - were lived in a complex way by sectors of the Portuguese population. 1919 marked the moment when those in support of a more egalitarian education for both girls and boys were able to initiate its implementation. The message was that girls with a similar education to boys, in future, would be able to occupy similar positions in the 'workplace' and in the 'citizenplace' in a less discriminatory way (the 'householdplace' was not considered at the time with the same intensity as also in need of a more egalitarian distribution). Those who opposed co-education saw their own solution - single-sex schools - adopted politically as a 'moral' solution, in 1927, in a context of social and political uncertainty. Sexes should be taught separately probably because the winning conservative sectors, in that year, intended to avoid specific changes in women's situation, or at least to frame them within more precise boundaries. In their view, women's traditional main role as mothers, housekeepers and wives should be secured through a separate education thus maintaining the subordination of women's situation.

III - Discourses on the role of women teachers and their situation within the profession

The contradictory views held about women (and by women as well as men) and about co-education were reflected in views about women teachers. Further, they had also implications in policy developments related to them.

It is useful, at this point, to identify several contradictory issues on this matter. In fact, women teachers were perceived by their female nature and condition as having the

special and intrinsic qualities necessary for teaching children, but at the same time they were seen as being harmful to boys' education. They were expected to behave according to established models of womanhood, but at the same time, they should be able to contribute to promoting change in rural areas in accordance with republican ideals. They should be involved in school activitites but, due to their condition as women, they should limit their involvement to a subordinate position within schools. The social imagery about women teachers was one of care, tenderness and patience, but men teachers feared them as competitors. Republicans did not grant women the right to vote. assuming their political conservatism. Neither did conservatives, in power after 1926, concede it to women primary teachers nor to other women who did not have a university degree or similar.

Therefore, perception of the heterogeneity and contradictory pressures on women and against co-education helps to explain the 'stormy' social tensions which enveloped women teachers even when they were in remote villages teaching children. It is not by chance that the role of men as teachers in primary schools was neither addressed with the same intensity nor even questioned. This fact probably confirms the idea that the republican image of the teacher, at the level of educational policiy-making, was a male image, as has been underlined in this thesis. Further, it was also an effect of the increasing presence of women in primary schools, in such a way that it was no longer possible to ignore that women already constituted the majority within the profession. Women's increasing presence could be perceived as a threat by those who were used to seeing teaching as

a male preserve. Hence, the presence of women had to be questioned by these sectors.

The debate on their situation and position within teaching appears to firstly revolve around the distinctive character of female teaching in contrast with men's. Thus, much of the discourse on *maternalism*, at the turn of the century (examined in chapter 4) re-emerged. However, it was framed along specific lines to which I will refer below. Moreover, there were hints that women's *specificity* in primary schools could be defined by a 'moral' role. Secondly, the assumptions regarding women, on the part of republicanism, could be heard in this debate. Some educators who intervened in the debate suggested that women were politically conservative. Thirdly, the issue of marriage concerning women teachers - echoing the marriage bar implemented in countries such as England although never concretised in Portugal - and the possibility of their becoming inspectors came to the forefront after the military coup of 1926. Finally, the debate was marked by the reply women teachers gave when questioned about their own expertise to teach the final years of primary school. They also challenged the accusations of conservatism made against them. Further, women headmistresses of girls' schools contested the 1919 regulations which adversely affected their rights regarding their professional situation. They wrote also about their right to become inspectors as well as of their right to marry and to continue their teaching in State schools. It is to these four points which I will turn next.

- **'Women's specificity' in teaching**

There was a clear concern, expressed by several republican educators, to clarify that women teachers were the best educators only for the youngest children. This concern marks the difference between republican educators' perspectives on women teachers'*specificity* and the perspective dominant at the turn of the century. These perspectives were similar in terms of content: women had the affection, delicacy, sweetness seen as important to help children to feel at ease in schools. However the difference lay in their 'suitability' for teaching, which was limited to the first three years of compulsory school. In the last two years, men were said to be the most appropriate because they were supposedly better able to discipline and guide the future lives of children. Both the 1919 regulations on primary schooling (as already examined in chapter 6) and the writings of (male) professionals supported this view. In that way, it was possible to articulate the *maternalist* perspective, expressed at the turn of the century, with the 'malaise' that male teachers experienced with the growing number of women in primary schools.

Rhetorical language and images were quite common such as the following:

> (...) the woman teacher is the heat which warms the delicate child's comprehension and she is, at the same time, the light which illuminates sensibility, covering with flowers the aridity of the mind and filling with stars the darkness of the brain. (...) Only she knows and is able to act in an attractive way, with plenty of kindness and affection[38].

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38 Eusébio de Queirós, in *A Federação Escolar*, II, 3rd phase (100), 25 January 1914.

Similar positions could be heard throughout the republican period and also afterwards (Cardoso Júnior 1922; Pélico 1923; Vieira 1923; Reynaud 1924b; Hilário 1930; Cristina 1933; Pinto 1933[39]).

From the beginning of the Republic, mysogenist views on women's *specificity* were expressed without disguise. They clearly revealed their own assumptions of women's subordinate status within the profession. For instance, a rural teacher wrote an article to *A Federação Escolar* (The School Federation) where he claimed that co-education should never be under the management of women teachers. Women were said to be necessary elements in schools, but "with a parallel and secondary position, assisting the lower school classes and teaching needlework". He also argued that the woman teacher should belong to the family of the male teacher "in order that submission and affection [which are a feature of family life] bring moral stability to school life". Further, he could not understand why women teachers needed to obtain the same professional qualification as men[40], since what was suitable for them was, in fact, knowledge about housework, motherhood and wifehood.

Therefore, he could state that men were the educators of women who needed to submit to them; and women could never educate men, because it was men's job to occupy a position of moral leadership and "mental discipline" in the general orientation of schooling. In his view, this was necessary to avoid that "races and habits will weaken and lose the masculinity of former times". It was necessary that the new (male) generations be able "to

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39 See also *A Federação Escolar*, III 5th phase (274), 7 June 1933 & (276), 21 June 1933

40 Another male teacher wrote to a journal supporting that women teachers should be paid less than their male counterparts. Women teachers protested. See such a protest by Julia Franco (1916).

defend the sacred heritage of the fatherland and confront all the dangers that only virile energies are able so to do". He was sure that "frightened and insecure beings", as he assumed women were, could only produce a "race of cowardly men"[41].

Quite similar views, albeit less crude, were expressed by other male teachers. Lopes da Costa (1919) used arguments which echoed some Parsonian arguments, to support women as the best educators of little children. Women teachers were similar to mothers and children entering the primary school would not feel the transition from the home to the school. Hence, women teachers would represent for little children a smooth transition into school. However, he stated clearly that older boys should not be taught by women since they would be "less courageous and energetic which is a feature of their own sex". He stressed that:

> (...) [women are] naturally weaker than men. They are sweeter, more amenable, they tend to forgive more. Hence, they cannot appear before their pupils, unless they are some kind of virago, as resolute and strong-willed at every point of the school day (Costa 1919).

Children in the last years of the primary school needed to be taught by a male teacher in order that

> (...) he, with the strength of his own sex, amend this weakness, and stamp in the character of (male) children capacity for decision, energy and courage. (...) [These are important qualities] in this historical period when nationalities need to assert themselves among a strong and vigorous population, ready to defend its interests and honour, even by the most violent means (Costa 1919).

Of course, according to Costa, "women's morbid feelings" and inconstancy were totally inadequate for attaining these ends.

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[41] The name of the teacher was João B. de Lemos, in *A Federação Escolar*, (108), 1 February 1911.

After the military coup of 1926, the editor of *O Professor Primário* (The Primary Teacher) wrote an article stressing again that women teachers were harmful to the construction of male identities. Boys would be perhaps more delicate, compassionate, with women's influence, but, at the same time, "they would be effeminate, without either the strength or the courage to confront the violent struggles of daily life". The authors of the article also feared that the increasing presence of women, in public life and in the 'workplace', would endanger the position of men in social life. Men were in danger of being "eternal losers". They advised the government that it needed to attract men to primary teaching, rewarding them for the expense made with their professional education and granting male teachers more places in primary schools[42].

Probably, the views expressed in these articles represented the particular position of conservative sectors within republicanism. At least, the protests against the above-mentioned positions came from sectors which spoke the language of women's rights and the role of education to promote a more equal status for women[43]. The more radical sectors among teachers (represented by Deolinda Lopes Vieira, Adolfo Lima and Albertina Costa, for instance - both women were feminists and Deolinda and Adolfo had close relations with the anarchist movement in education) stressed that women teachers were able to teach older children,

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42 In *O ProfessorPrimário*, VIII (373), 23 January 1927. The same teachers' journal, in 1929, informed that the Secretary of State for Instruction had resigned. It also identified many of the education problems in Portugal. Among them was the increasing number of women in primary education which was considered "inconvenient". According to this view, education needed mostly to be taught by men (in *O Professor Primário*, XI (413), 2 December 1929).

43 See the reply from Delfina A. Lopes, in *A Federação Escolar*, 1911, (110); also J. Alves de Sousa, *idem* (112), 4 March 1911 and (121), 6 March 1911.

since they had a similar professional education and culture. They agreed that women were the best educators of small children, "more able to inspire them with the most pure feelings of kindness, justice, and altruism" (Costa *et al* 1921:58). In that way, they opposed the official perspective of the 1919 regulations on primary schooling, where men teachers were presented as able, if necessary, to teach any class in primary school whilst women were restricted to the youngest.

Apparently, in opposition to restricting women's activity to primary teaching, other sectors of republicans asserted women's qualities as teachers, as more zealous, dedicated and competent than their male counterparts. The presentation of pecuniary awards to women teachers by a town hall (Loures), as the three most competent teachers in the borough, brought protests from male teachers. One of them declared that he was ashamed that no male teacher was granted an award. He doubted that women teachers could be considered as more competent than their male colleagues. His explanation was different: he was sure that increasingly women were filling the teaching posts because they were "more shy, less exigent and they were almost indifferent to the local organisation of the Union [he was referring to the radical teachers' organisation" *União do Professorado Primário, UPP*] (Pompeu 1925). A male teacher from the borough, where the awards were presented, and a militant of UPP contested the discriminatory arguments against women and asserted that women teachers were as militant as men in the local organisation of the Union (Barata 1925).

Another line of argument in favour of women teachers' *specificity* was their role in the moralisation and regeneration of

Portuguese society, as seen above. This was based on the assumption that the education given by the family (in particular, peasant and urban working classes) was deficient. Mothers were seen as not prepared for the education of their children, either because they had not received an education themselves (Gamboa 1925) or because their frivolities and concern for fashion did not leave them with much time to look after their children (Reynaud 1925). Therefore, the school had to play this role, concerning itself with the moral education of children. Women teachers needed to set a good example of modesty and honesty, and should behave according to strict moral precepts. Their style of dressing was, particularly, object of close scrutiny. Sleeveless dresses exposed bare arms, flimsy textiles which clung to the female body highlighted their sex, causing scandal among teachers[44]. Some women teachers argued that the display of the semi-naked female body (i.e. parts of it which were hidden until then) contributed to women not being honoured as they should be, being treated as the object of "daring looks by the stronger sex". Women needed to protect themselves with modesty and decency (Louro 1923). Men teachers, at least some, accused young women teachers of causing scandal in the villages where they were teaching by their immoderate way of dressing and criticised them for being "frivolous" and being "more interested in fashion than in studying and applying seriously the more modern methods and processes of teaching" (Guimarães1923:139).

Women teachers should also be able to rescue working class girls morally, to prevent them from falling into the trap of

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[44] See, for instance, the article "Notas Ligeiras", signed by the female pseudonym "Madre-Silva" in *O Professor Primário*, V (196), 12 July 1923.

prostitution. It was female nature and identity which provided women teachers with the means of being successful in this role (Artur 1926).

Further, the "moral role" was also extended to issues of social equality and justice. It was expected that women teachers would teach the younger generations to "value and respect the legitimacy of principles". Women had an "unknown power to transform socially the future" (Moreno 1919). Ana Osório also argued that women teachers were important elements "to waken the Portuguese people from depression and routine (...) bringing to them notions of culture, progress, hygiene and civic education" (Osório 1918:58). She added that there was great expectation that women teachers would give "moral help in order that every child in the country, even the poorest, (...) can find the kind interest of our fraternity" (ibidem:77). In that way, they needed to be dedicated to teaching as "women missionaries of a pure and noble belief in national reconstruction" (ibidem:61).

However, the majority of the outpourings regarding the *specificity* of women in teaching framed it in a subordinate situation within the occupation. In addition to what has been stressed before, the question of women becoming inspectors sheds even more light on this issue. In 1929, after the military coup of 1926, a legal document created the place for the first women inspectors in primary education. Some educators spoke in favour of their emergence some time before, on the basis that women should not be prevented from entering the inspectorate. Selection for these posts should be operated, not on the basis of the sex of the candidate, but in terms of individual merit, although women's "special psychological vision" was seen as "crucial in education"

(Silva 1927). In contrast, the conservative sectors, organised around *A Educação Nacional* (The National Education) started a campaign against the nomination of women for the inspectorate, at least in a non discriminatory way.

There were two factions. The first firmly opposed their nomination to the post. It was feminism which was explicitly criticised for the outcomes it obtained for women's lives:

> Feminism has a tendency to invade everything and because of this women are increasingly displaced and the family is gradually dissolved. We know women [who work] within schools, but not women who ride horseback for great distances to visit schools [as inspectors], leaving their children with servants. This is a symptom of a society which is perishing[45].

There were voices which explicitly claimed that there was a "natural order" by which men always would occupy the posts of command. These were "eternal and immutable laws" and for that reason women were not fit to become inspectors[46]. Other arguments were that women did not have either "the energy or the supremacy" to occupy such places[47].

The second faction within this educational journal came out supporting women as inspectors restricted to girls' schools. Women as teachers and as inspectors were necessary, within the principle of the separation of sexes in schools, since girls' schools would be under the supervision and management of women. There were women teachers who were good educators and had splendid qualifications, able to occupy such posts. The ideal that should be followed was men teaching and inspecting in boys' schools, and

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45 In *A Educação Nacional*, II, 2nd phase, (53), 4 March 1928, p. 4.
46 In *A Educação Nacional*, II, 2nd phase, (154), 9 February 1930, p.2.
47 In *A Educação Nacional*, XXX, (20), 1o July 1932, p.3.

women, in girls' schools.[48] Hence, it was admitted, albeit with some resistances from the more conservative sectors, that women teachers were fitted to become inspectors, but should be restricted to a female school organisation.

It may be concluded that the educational press revealed that the debates on women teachers aimed to demonstrate their *specificity* in primary schools. Hence, *maternalism* remained as a central topic of the educational discourse on women teachers, as it was at the end of the nineteenth-century. However, it was framed within specific limits, since, as seen, women were considered as the best educators but only of the first three years of primary school. Further, their role as carriers of a strict morality was emphasised. Regarding both emphasis on women teachers and their role, I have a sense of the restrictions which were impinged on them, as they were pressed to accomodate to traditional images of femininity. These images were the visible expression of patriarchal relations.

However, fractions of republican sectors and feminist militants expected that women teachers' activities would be guided by more open and egalitarian concerns. Although their expectations could be seen in the light of women as regenerators of Portuguese society, these expectations still represented an attempt to confront women with the basic inequalitites in society and the creation of opportunities for their right to exist in more egalitarian conditions.

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[48] In *A Educação Nacional*, II, 2nd phase, (102), 10 February; IV, 2nd phase (157), 2 March 1930; XXX (20), 10 July 1932; XXX (22), 24 July 1932.

• women teachers, politics and religion

In the educational press analysed, during the republican years, the issue of the political involvement of women teachers was not often debated. However, women teachers referred several times to the accusations made against them of political conservatism. They felt that they were living in a context where such assumptions were common. These women teachers, in their articles, were convinced that the production of education policies, related to gender relations, was influenced by such assumptions. As will be seen below, many of them saw the ban on them teaching older children in primary school as a result of the assumptions of political conservatism, supported by fractions of republicans.

That such assumptions were quite common can also be seen in the attempts to prevent women teachers from voting for "Juntas Escolares" (Local Education Boards), when decentralisation was reorganised in 1919, and the Boards consisted of a specific number of teachers elected by their peers, both men and women. One such case occurred in a Northern town (Barcelos) where some elements of the administration of the borough prevented the local female teachers from voting[49].

At the same time, in a social situation where women teachers did not occupy positions of leadership, or at least, were represented in restricted numbers on the committees of the teachers' organisations, probably it might have been expected that the educational press would have included some appeals for their mobilisation. However, apparently, there were not many during the republican years. The one I found was an appeal inserted in *A*

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[49] In *A Federação Escolar*, 8, 3 rd phase (380), 12 July 1919.

Federação Escolar (The School Federation) and signed by a male teacher. He argued for the advantages for women teachers in joining a teachers' union, strengthening their professional activity. The message was clear: women teachers could be good and zealous professionals, but, because of their gender, their professional competence was overlooked. They needed the strength of the Union even more than their male peers: it could offer them support to overcome a lack of power due to their gender[50].

After the military coup of 1926, at least two appeals were clearly made for their participation in pedagogic congresses, and praising their collaboration. The latter Congresses were said to be characterised by "collective fraternity" and "solidarity" because women were there. Women were constructing a "new individuality", struggling for their emancipation. The profession was in need of what they could obtain through their "intelligence, psychological qualities, their own internal conditions" (sic) (Belo 1927a). The other appeal paid tribute to their presence in congresses, stressing that their number needed to be increased. At the same time, the author of the article applauded the election of two women[51] to the Federal Council of the Union. He also expected that women would be elected to the other boards of the UPP (Santos 1930).

The *National Council of Portuguese Women* protested against the fact that women teachers could not be chosen as "juízes de paz" (village judges), on the same terms as their male

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50 The article was written by José Cabrita, a man teacher from Faro, in *A Federação Escolar*, 7, 3rd phase (314), 23 March 1918.

51 The two women were Joana Carreira, as representant of the Lisbon section and Beatriz Magalhães, from the Setúbal section.

peers[52]. There were also protests against the fact that women primary teachers were still not able to vote, when the right to vote was granted to university qualified women. The arguments were based on the fact that not only did women primary teachers have a diploma, but also they were in charge of the "educative role which grants women teachers more authority and civic consciousness to vote"[53].

Women teachers were also accused, at least by some republicans to which *A Federação Escolar* (The School Federation) gave voice, of contributing to break the "neutrality" of the school in religious matters:

> It is among the enemies of radicalism that we can find the enemies of the primary school, since they see its action as harmful to their interests (...). The enemies of radicalism oppose human progress, they do not want the children of the people to be acquainted with more open realities (Sousa 1927).

In the perspective of this teacher, women (and men as well, although in a less visible way) were teaching Catholic Catechism to rural children in order "to oppose the effect of the neutrality of the school" (Sousa 1927).

Most probably, there was, among most republicans, a mistrust of women teachers' adhesion to the political ideals of the regime. They were seen as more prone to religion and conservative politics than convinced of the importance of progressive social change. It remains to be seen how much republican views on women teachers' conservatism were influenced by the assumptions of "woman's weak nature" (both physically and psychologically) inherited from Darwinist and other philosophical traditions.

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52 In *O Professor Primário*, VIII (373), 23 January 1927.

53 *A Federação Escolar*, III, 5th phase (171), 17 June 1931.

To sum up, the educational republican press did not present a uniform political and religious view on women teachers. If some articles presented them as conservative and dependent on the restricted views of the Catholic Church, others saw them as harbingers of progressive social change and the hope for the renewal of the profession.

From these perspectives, we may return to the issue (discussed in a former chapter) of women's presumed 'disfunctionality' towards the republican regime and their supposed 'functionality' regarding the dictatorship which sometimes find echo in the Social Sciences in Portugal. At least, from what we have seen, there is no homogeneous support for women's political and religious conservatism. Women teachers, as well as men, contested this view, inquiring at the same time, into why men were spared from the same accusations. Presumably, the content of patriarchal relations, emphasising how much women should restrict their activities, was responsible for such a construction of women's political identities during these years.

- **the issue of marriage for women teachers**

During the republican years, the issue of marriage and women teachers was not generally debated in the educational press. However, after the 1926 military coup, there were several articles, in particular in *A Educação Nacional* (The National Education), bringing the issue to the forefront. The first question to be debated concerned maternity leave that the republican regime granted to married and non-married women teachers and school employees. This was seen by specific sectors as the "dissolution of morality", as well as the "first stage for free

love"[54]. When in 1928, the law restricted this right to married women teachers, it was commented upon as an important victory over "a bolshevick disposition"[55].

In 1933, the debate focused again the issue of marriage but now the question raised was whether married women teachers should be allowed to work in schools. This debate probably echoed policies related to the marriage bar which was implemented in other countries, such as England (cf. Oram 1987). In one of the articles[56], women teachers were said to constitute a "new class of slaves, of true martyrs" because they were teaching many dozens of children and at the same time, they were giving birth and caring for their own children. They needed to rest. Thus, it was necessary to alleviate them of such a strenuous effort which was "inhuman"[57]. A male teacher debated this article in *A Educação Nacional* (The National Education), stressing that he did not consider married women teachers as "slaves". They did not merit this qualification, because they were only slaves of their duties of mothers, wives and housekeepers, in accordance to their life as Catholics and followers of God's law. For wives, the family and the home were the "altar of sacrifice" and not the "life of pleasure" which only futile and criminal women were able to search for (Leal 1933). Married women teachers who did not avoid "their duty of becoming mothers" should be applauded since this was the best way of accomplishing their duty with regard to the State which employed them. But, at the same time, the author of the article

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54 In *A Educação Nacional*, 1, 2nd phase (1), 23 February 1927, p. 4; (10), 8 May 1927, p.2; (12), 22 May 1927, p. 3.

55 In *A Educação Nacional* (National Education), 1, 2nd phase (48), 29 January 1928.

56 This article appeared in the right-wing newspaper *Novidades*, and was reproduced in *A Educação Nacional* (The National Education).

57 In *A Educação Nacional* (The National Education), XXX (52), 19 February 1933.

was puzzled. He was confronted by the voices which accused women teachers of becoming too expensive for the State due to their maternity leave, and ther frequent absences from their school duties. He asked himself whether the State should defend itself from the great expenses that married women teachers put on the budget. In the end of the article, he was disposed to accept that the State had a right to cut the maternity leave (Leal 1933). Hence, from his perspective, married women teachers should continue to teach and have children - this was their duty to the State. However, the right of women to maternity leave paid by the State was something that he began to question and surely he was echoing sectors which were pressing the State for cutting or at least shortening the period of maternity leave. These sectors had already been successful when the right to paid maternity leave was restricted to married women.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to notice that the right-wing educational journal *A Educação Nacional* was divided on the issue of married women having the right to work. Undoubtedly, the editors argued, it was important to defend women teachers' children and the stability of their homes. Certainly, women were competing with men and contributing to increase their unemployment. However, on the other hand, women were needed to teach in girls' schools. Further, the salaries of their partners were low and there were no prospects for increasing family subsidies or husbands' salaries. Hence, "the best thing will be that everything continues as it has until a solution is found to solve the problem according to sacred human interests and those of the State"[58]. In

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[58] In *A Educação Nacional* (The National Education), XXXI (2), 5 March 1933, p.4.

other educational journals, such as *Escola Moderna* (Modern School), although censorship was already established, there were male teachers who expressed their support for the work of married women teachers (Campos 1933).[59]

All these debates contribute to make it clear that the situation of women after the 1926 military coup was more precarious, more subject to changes which intended to restrict them to traditional places and consequently, to restrict their possibilities for action. In this context, the debate on the possibility of putting into question equal pay for women teachers is better understood. Joaquina Flores, a primary teacher, referred these attempts during discussions about the increase of teachers' salaries. A topic frequently raised was the possibility of women teachers being paid less than their colleagues, which for the author of the article was unacceptable (Flores 1930).

In the next section, I will draw attention to the protest of married women teachers against attempts to block their right to work.

- **women teachers' protests against discrimination**

Between 1919 and 1927, women teachers wrote to education journals protesting against the discrimination inherent in the new legal regulations. As already stressed, the legal diploma, which established co-education in primary state schools, excluded women from teaching the last two compulsory years,

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[59] It is useful to remember at this point that the debate on the situation of married women teachers appears to end in 1936, with the publication of a legal document stating that they were compelled to ask permission to marry. The permission was dependent on the "good moral and civil behaviour" of the bridegroom as well as whether his earnings were compatible with those of the woman teacher (*decree* 27.279, 24 November 1936, quoted in Santos & Roque 1939:89).

whilst men were allowed to teach any class. Initially, some women teachers' attitudes were cautious, since the more detailed regulations were not yet published, and, as they said, they did not believe that the intention, from republican politicans, was to harm women's professional interests[60]. However, other republican women teachers took a different attitude. Beatriz Magalhães, later a member of the Board of the UPP, wrote an article entitled "Is the woman teacher politicallly conservative?" She stressed that some of the articles of the 1919 regulations aimed to remove older children from the "pernicious influence" of women teachers, as they were accused of being conservative while "in these articles, men teachers were implicitly exempted of any suspicion" (Magalhães 1919). She could not see how such accusations originated and totally disagreed with them. In a later article, she claimed that such regulations were "an offence, even more disgusting since they came from male colleagues who were not the best moral referees" (Magalhães 1920; also Correia 1919).

The second area of conflict was related to the headmistresses of girls' schools. They were accused of being against the 1919 regulations, opposing the amalgamation of girls' with boys' schools. Their opposition was classifed as a result of "personal vanities" which aimed to be set above the "interests of education and the dispositions of the law"[61]. In protest, a headmistress from Oporto wrote stating that headmistresses of girls' schools were clear about the meaning of amalgamation. Girls'

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[60] For instance, this was the attitude of women teachers, probably republican, in Castro Verde, in the South of the country (in *O Professor Primário*, 1 (19), 27 July 1919).

[61] "Fusão de Escolas", *A Federação Escolar*, 9, 3 rd phase (457), 22 January 1921. This article is not signed. However, the editors of the journal later declared that the unsigned articles were of their responsibility.

schools would be assimilated by boys' schools and the new director would surely be the headmaster of the latter. Hence, the word meant women's subordination to the masculine world: "Hence, dear colleague, do you not see that we cannot be happy while watching the destruction of a school for which we have worked so hard, with such affection" (Rebelo 1921). This headmistress saw herself and her colleagues as 'rebellious' towards the new regulations which deprived them of their rights. The editors of the journal replied that their protests lacked firm evidence: the head would be chosen on merit and not because of his/her sex. It would be a sex-blind choice: "The head should be the teacher who deserves most to fulfil the mission of managing and guiding the school" (Caramalho 1921). Most probably, the headmistresses were right in their protests: it was difficult to believe that, in a patriarchal society such as Portugual, women teachers would be chosen on merit to be responsible for mixed schools and to replace former headmasters.

In teachers' congresses, women also protested with similar arguments. The Congress of the UPP held in 1920 declared that it was in favour of both women and men teaching any of the primary school years[62]. The teachers close to the anarchists were also in favour of women teachers' rights and ability to teach in the last two years (Costa *et al* 1921).

After the military coup of 1926, women teachers were still able to make their voices heard, on the right of women teachers to become inspectors and of married women to continue to work in schools. Júlia Franco stressed women's right to occupy

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62 "O Congresso Pedagógico" in *A Federação Escolar*, 8, 3rd phase (406), 10 January 1920. See also "Congresso Extraordinário da União - Actas das Sessões, in *O Professor Primário*, II (40), 25 January 1920.

any position within schools with great vigour. Women's participation in society - whatever their situation - was important, and surely their millennial exclusion could explain the imperfectibility of human societies[63]. Tília Vieira demonstrated the importance and value of married women teachers in schools, as similar to single women teachers[64]. Aura de Lima claimed that the struggle for life was as important for men as for women, either single or married. Married women teachers were not 'martyrs', they had the right to dignity through their own effort and work (Lima 1933). What was important was to implement the protection of women teachers when in their period of maternity (Marcela 1933).

The feminist movement, although representing a restricted number of women, argued in favour of women teachers as educators of both sexes. Once more, Ana Osório expressed her views on women. She stressed that they did not represent a threat for the construction of masculinity. Her article clearly assumed a form of protest against the discriminations that women teachers suffered, after the 1926 military coup[65].

The protests by women teachers demonstrate that not only were they conscious of the oppressive structures in which they were located, but also found the opportunity to defend their own point of view as well as their professional and female identities. Their attitudes towards discriminatory regulations help us to see women teachers of the past in a new light. In fact, they were not just passive and helpless beings, immersed in routine and conservatism. As Prentice and Theobald (1991) emphasise, it is an

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63 In *Educação Nacional* III, 2nd phase (154),) February 1930, p. 1-2.
64 In *Educação Nacional*, XXXI (4), 19 March 1933.
65 Quoted in *A Educação Nacional*, IV, 2 nd phase, (163), 13 April 1930.

important task of the historiography of women teachers to be able to reveal both the harshness of the social conditions in which women teachers lived and taught, and the way they fought these conditions, as active beings. The educational press did, in fact, represent a means through which women teachers were able to resist the regulations which harmed their rights as women and as teachers.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed some of the polemical issues of the republican years, and the late 1920s and the early 1930s, of the Military Dictatorship, concerning gender relations. They are seen, in this thesis, as bearing a strong relation to the situation of women teachers and as throwing some light on the construction of primary teaching as *women's work*.

Firstly, and in considerable detail, the 'images of femininity' and of women's role in society were analysed, taking into consideration the various main political and ideological groups existing in the Portuguese social formation, at the time. A broad consensus was shared by these groups on wifehood, domestic work and motherhood as the 'natural' stages of women's lives. However, specific fractions within the leftist groups supported open forms of women's existence, and defended women's right to work outside the home, even for those who were married. They also struggled for their enfranchisement. The broad consensus that women's role was of housekeepers, mothers and wives contributes to our understanding of the social conditions structuring women teachers' lives. As women, it was expected they would conform

with strict rules of moral behaviour and would have as their central concern everything related to domestic duties. As women teachers, their professional role was very much conditioned by the images of family life and their role as mothers of little children.

However, in a social context where the language of women's rights was also heard and able to influence some republican policies, it may be said that women's situation was more contradictory than the existence of the basic consensus would allow us to think. As will be seen in the next and final chapter on the *experience* of women teachers, although they lived in remote rural villages, where the Catholic Church maintained strong influence, they were able to live unconventional lives or support democratic forms of schooling. One of them was able to divorce a harassing husband, and carry out her professional life in the company of her three children. Another disregarded needlework in girls' education as she was very much concerned with equality of opportunity for them, granting the knowledge necessary for the construction of meaningful lives, as an escape to traditional roles. Women teachers were also able, from the villages where they lived, to claim their right to be treated on equal terms to their male peers. Hence, their interventions in the educational press often used the language of rights to defend their interests as women and professionals and the interests of the school.

Secondly, the debates on single or co-educational schools were of crucial importance for women teachers' situation. In fact, they throw light on the issue of gender relations, revealing that they were an important conflictual issue among the different political sectors. Several lines were crossed around this issue. On the one hand, there were fears about the risks of relationships

which independent women could face with the opposite sex, either a peer or an inspector; or even the relationships that could take place outside of marriage. It seems likely that, due to these fears, the young women teachers going to villages were never allowed to live alone.

On the other hand, there was the relationship between the woman teacher and her pupils. As pointed out in the case of small children, this relation was seen as unproblematic. The continuity between the role of the mother and of the woman teacher was sometimes emphasised, reproducing a discourse very similar in its content to *maternalism,* analysed at the end of the nineteenth century. The education of girls by women teachers was no problem either. It was the teaching of older boys which was seen as problematic: their presumed effeminisation was feared. The fact that this was voiced in particular during the last phase of the Republic could be related to the crisis of masculinity to which Mary Nash (1991) refers (see chapter 5) applied to the Spanish, and other European cases. The entry of women into the public sphere, in growing numbers, and in particular in teaching, awakened male hostility. Men teachers, fearing the increasing number of women in the profession, joined the argument (quite traditional and dated) that women teachers' educational influence on older boys was harmful to the construction of their male identities.

In 1919, the reconstructed Republic implemented co-education as a more democratic institutionalised form of achieving equality for girls. However, at the same time, the Republic also tried to incorporate the interests of male teachers, keeping the last two years of the primary school as a male preserve. It seems that the argument of women's influence as

harmful to older boys was probably used to support the establisment of such a preserve.

It is clear, from all the debates on women and men teachers, that patriarchal relations were confronted, not only at the ideological level, but also in some of its features, and were compelled to change. The traditional images of femininity and of women's role were now set in a contested terrain, at least in urban areas.

Women teachers living in rural villages would probably experience less of the conflict analysed above, although many of them, as the educational press demonstrates, made their voices heard from these villages. However, those living in towns were more involved in the conflictual views of what should define women's lives and activities. They were more likely to assume more diverse ways of living. Surely Portuguese society was changing in some aspects, regarding patriarchal relations. At least, it is in that sense that we can understand the complaints and accusations of "domestic unrest" and the consternation and panic that male writers revealed, concerning women's work outside the home. Even some of the more radical male politicians, educators and unionists suffered these fears.

The Republic expected that primary teachers would be "patriots", as Catroga underlines (1991). However, those who increasingly filled primary teaching posts were women to whom the Republic refused political rights. Hence, they were not provided with the political means for expressing their assessment of the political regime. Their situation was deeply contradictory: they were expected to raise children as future republican citizens, while, at the same time, they were not considered worthy of a

more complete form of citizenship. In fact, many of the republican perspectives on education expected women to be caring, compassionate and delicate beings towards their young pupils, whilst occupying a subordinate position towards their male peers.

In the transition from the Republic to the "Estado Novo", despite a small number of women being able to vote from 1931, women primary teachers were still denied this right. This can be understood in light of the declining emphasis on the role of education for self-development and more enlarged forms of citizenship. As several authors have stressed, the teacher changed from being "the priest of democracy" to become a "moulder of souls". School was increasingly (albeit inconsistently between 1926 and 1933) involved in spreading the ideals of an authoritarian regime.

Continuities can be found, between both periods, concerning some aspects. Firstly, the broad consensus on women's main role as mothers, wives and housekeepers was not initiated either in the Military Dictatorship or in the "Estado Novo", but was debated and supported with fervour during the republican years by several sectors.

Secondly, in both periods, the prospect of women working outside the home was feared as women would compete with men in the 'workplace'. Although the emphasis on the evil of women's work outside the home became more visible once the Military Dictatorship was replaced by the 'Estado Novo', there were equally strong attacks on this issue in the republican years.

Thirdly, both periods registered a mistrust towards women as potential political candidates and voters. Although the elections under the 'Estado Novo' (the first was in 1934) were

rigged by the rulers of the regime, the regime never extended the right to vote to women on similar terms to men. And as we have seen, the republicans refused the vote to women in 1913, despite positive expectations to the contrary.

This chapter reveals the complexity with regard to women's role and the images of femininity as well as the ways in which gender relations were perceived (and feared) in both periods. It also demonstrates that the interpretation of women as 'functional' or 'disfunctional' to political regimes oversimplifies complex changing patriarchal relations and images of femininity.

Chapter 9

Pathways and *Subjectivities* of Women Teachers through their Life Histories

> "If the subjective story is what the researcher is after, the life history approach becomes the most valid method" (Plummer 1983:102).

I - Introduction

In this chapter, I intend to concentrate on women teachers' pathways and *subjectivities* on the basis of the accounts they have produced about their own lives. It is an attempt, following Liz Stanley's words, to "speak the close detail of the fabric of women's lives" (Stanley 1992:160). My aim is to 'make visible' their biographies, which are so neglected in Portuguese Social Sciences and Education, revealing their identities and experiences, including the conflicts between public and private, personal and professional. This aim is further reinforced by the notion that the views of these women educators need to be recorded since they have been traditionally excluded from the construction of a public discourse on schooling.

The intention is to enable their *voices* to be heard in this thesis, to assure that the way they have related their own life histories to me as a researcher gains in this thesis its full significance. There is an explicit intention to appreciate and value women teachers' lives, in the same way as Stanley states the feminist aim of insisting upon "the re-evaluation of women's lives and experiences as important and worthy of serious study"

(1992:91). Indeed, other feminists also stress "the imperative right of women to have a 'voice', their need to express their different experience, and the importance of uncovering suppressed and forgotten female texts" (Sommer 1988:136). One of the assumptions behind such a statement is the belief that there is a way of looking, listening and analysing these voices which, some argue, implies an alternative epistemology and even an alternative ontology with their roots in the oppressive structures which women experience. Stanley, for instance, stresses in a polemical way:

> Feminism constitutes an *ontology*, a different way of being in the world which is rooted in the facts of oppression. In the same way that I would argue that whites, no matter how well meaning nor how politically right-on, cannot share a black ontology and its resultant epistemology, so too I argue that men cannot share a feminist ontology nor its resultant epistemology (1992:253).

In light of what has been said previously, this study of the construction of primary teaching as *women's work* would miss almost completely the vision of those women who came to sit in the teacher's chair, if it were unable to listen to their views, hear their personal experiences, sense their feelings, understand the changes they have undergone and their contributions to education. C. Wright Mills stressed that, in his view, sociology should follow methodological procedures which he encapsulated in the notion of the 'sociological imagination' and which, in his famous words, "enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society" (Mills 1970:12). His emphasis that "no social study that does not come back to the problem of biography, of history and of their interconnections within a society has completed its intellectual journey" stands as an important

reminder for all sociologists[1]. His words are even more relevant with regard to women teachers' biographies in Portugal. If in Portugal there do in fact exist some published memories and autobiographies of men teachers (see Guimarães 1923 and Dória 1948), it is much more difficult to find the voices of women teachers.

By contributing to the construction of their lives in a written form, I am aware that the lives of these women teachers are, as Stanley puts it, "common lives, typical lives - insofar as any lives are typical - of the mass of the ordinary people but which are nonetheless extraordinarily interesting" (1992:12). Historians and sociologists concerned with individualised pathways and *subjectivities* stress the need for Social Sciences to concentrate on the lives of those who have been marginalised by the structures of power in society, those who are usually perceived as having 'common lives' (see, for instance, Ferrarotti 1983; Plummer 1983; Thompson 1988).

Meanings, the making sense of lived experience, emotions and feelings are indeed important areas in this kind of research in which the aim is to bring together structure and agency. Differently from earlier chapters of the thesis, which were based mainly on the analysis of documentary (non personal) sources, I shall in this chapter deal with 'documents of life'. An attempt will be made "to grasp and to reconcile, as Plummer stresses, the problem of individuality and collectivity, of human agency and creativity matched up with collective constraint and control"

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[1] Life histories have not yet been used widely in sociological studies in Portugal. Among the few published studies using them are Magalhães *el al* (1991), Henrique Araújo (1992) and Moita (1992).

(Plummer 1983:78). There is a refusal to be involved in a 'process of amputation' (Plummer 1983:68) which characterises much of the research in Social Sciences, that is, the denial of the biographical experience. Denzin quotes Derrida to make the point that 'interpretive sociology' has been "haunted by a *metaphysics of presence* which asserts that real, concrete subjects live lives with meaning and these meanings have a concrete presence in the lives of these people" (Denzin 1989:14).

I do not feel, however, 'haunted by a metaphysics of presence'. What I am, in fact, concerned with in this chapter is with the presence of a *subject*, more concretely with the biographical experiences of women teachers. In the previous chapter, the acknowledgement of women teachers' resistance to State regulations, which discriminated against them on the basis of their gender, was evidence of their active role in the construction of teaching. Therefore, the structural framework adopted earlier on in the thesis was counterbalanced by another which recognised that women teachers were conscious of their location within oppressive structures and expressed their own views on these matters. Clearly, women may be perceived as active subjects, often challenging the oppressive representations and processes in which they are located, not only individually but also through their participation in social groups.

Liz Stanley underlines this aspect precisely recalling that biographical subjects are "agents of their lives and not (...) puppets [whose] thoughts and actions [are] determined" (Stanley 1992:219). This active aspect of subjects' lives is something which is emphasised by those who write life histories. The accent is placed

on the need to maintain a concept of the active subject throughout the presentation and analysis of life histories:

> Many sociologists start out with a view of the person as an active, creative, world builder but before they have completed their theoretical endeavours they have enchained, dehumanised, rendered passive and lost that same person. The subject has become the object, the person has become the statistic, the creative has become the constrained, the human being has become the abstraction (Plummer 1983:78).

As a result of these concerns, my intention in recording women teachers' life histories extends beyond merely recounting the main stages of their careers. Undoubtedly the act of addressing the specific and detailed aspects of their professional development will help us to understand the *content* of the process of feminisation occurring throughout the period under study. However, their life histories may well also reveal the way they struggled in their daily lives to make sense of both their teaching activities and their family lives.

In "Searching for hidden struggles through life histories" (Araújo 1990), I stressed that, by adopting this methodological procedure, I might be able to discover the "hidden struggles" of women teachers. This expression derives from the work of the Portuguese sociologist, Filomena Mónica, in *Educação e Sociedade no Portugal de Salazar* (1978). In her analysis of the ideologies and politics of "salazarism", between 1926 and 1939, she acknowledges the importance of studying resistances to the regime (although she did not pursue this line of research):

> If censorship, and the imposition of a rigid orthodoxy, after 1932, suffocated public debates, they could not suppress subterranean heresies. The problem is that we still know little of the hidden struggles that occurred during salazarism (1978:11-12).

Although the period investigated in this thesis ends in 1933, that is, in the year in which the legal foundations of the 'Estado Novo' were launched, it is important to understand how the transition from one political regime to another was experienced by women teachers in their 'workplaces'. Was there resistance to the new political order? Was the new situation ignored? Was there a process of assimilation into the 'new order'? Did they develop various strategies to deal with an increasingly threatening situation for teachers' autonomy and qualification?

The 'hidden struggles' of these women teachers may also be revealed through the way they confronted patriarchal relations. What was their knowledge of the changing legal situation of women? How did they assess such changes? Were these changes of some use to them? What was their opinion of, and attitude towards, the feminist movement? How did they contend with the renewed accent on their role in the family (more emphasised in the 'Estado Novo')?

Moreover, through the use of life histories of women teachers, there also arises an opportunity to reveal their *subjectivities* in terms of the meaning they attach to their situation as women teachers in the 'public' domain, and in this case, often working in remote villages, having to live alone with their children or leaving them behind with their families.

Finally, through gathering life histories, my own involvement in this problematic as a feminist researcher takes on a new meaning. Firstly, it becomes an attempt to understand and contribute to the construction of Women's History, profiting from women teachers' own perspectives. It becomes not only a way of making the work of women teachers, carried out in difficult and

oppressive structures, visible, but also a way of recognising their involvement in teaching, which was sometimes courageous, and at others, persistent. Given the conditions in which they lived, and the contradictions they experienced and expressed, they should be recognised as women pioneers. Secondly, my own involvement in this project becomes visible. This takes the form of what Le Grand (1988) has called an "implicational heuristic", i.e. "a way of finding, of discovering, which means to give birth to oneself, through the act of writing". Denzin has written in somewhat similar terms, stressing that "when a writer writes a biography, he or she writes him or herself into the life of the subject written about" (Denzin 1989:26). In fact, whilst collecting these life histories and in working on their presentation, the process of *verstehen* was often mobilised, bringing together (i.e. attempting to understand the meanings given to) the experiences related to me by these women teachers as well as my own experience as a woman and a teacher. This process of giving birth to one's self resulted from the search for meanings and words that could express the richness and deep feelings of women teachers' lives, within the contradictions in which they lived. It is thus acknowledged that all these processes have had consequences for my own self. As Liz Stanley states: "'Doing biography' changes how you think about yourself, and this in turn changes how you understand the subject" (1992:159). This is not the place to reflect upon the changes I, myself, experienced. Here it is enough to acknowledge that these changes took place. Finally, in bringing their *voices* to this thesis, I want also to make public the way in which the relationship between these teachers and myself has developed: sometimes as close friendship, arising out of curiosity,

understanding, admiration, affection and even, sometimes, as a kind of complicity between women.

I had the opportunity to talk to five women primary teachers in order to reconstruct their life histories, as women and professionals. The five teachers were born between 1899 and 1910. To safeguard their anonymity, I have called them: Luisa, Isaura, Ana, Teresa and Laura. It is now time to introduce them briefly.

Luisa, Isaura and Laura started their professional lives before the 28th May 1926; Ana and Teresa in the following years. Luisa, Teresa and Laura were nineteen years of age when they entered teaching; Isaura was twenty two; Ana started when she was twenty six. They retired in the late sixties or in the early seventies. All of them married and had children, and later became grandmothers, and even great-grandmothers. At the time of our meetings, all of them were widows. Generally, they praised their professional lives and defined themselves as very much involved in teaching. Each started her teaching career, in a small village, initially as a relief teacher ("professora interina"), and later getting a permanent post. Only after some years were they finally able to come to teach in or near a town. This was generally considered to be a desirable step in the development of their professional career.

In this chapter, firstly, various theoretical contributions on life histories will be reviewed critically, giving some attention to the work by the Italian sociologist Franco Ferrarotti (1983) *Histoire et Histoires de Vie*, where one encounters his stimulating, albeit controversial, proposal on the "explosive subjectivity of life histories". Hopefully, it will become clear how much Ferrarotti's

perspective distances itself from the more common use of life histories.

Secondly, I will clarify some aspects of the 'doing of life histories' using the expression of Plummer (1983). Although it is not the place here to go into detail about the methodological and technical aspects of 'doing life histories', some basic points need to be addressed.

Thirdly, Teresa, Luisa, Ana, Isaura and Laura are introduced in a more detailed way to allow for a better understanding of what they reveal about their lives. Finally, their life histories - through their own words and mine - shall be presented. This is a difficult task since it is necessary to capture both the similarities and diversity of elements of their lives. Moreover, their subjectivities are not uncovered easily. This is a crucial step in the construction of Women's History.

II - Life Histories: further theoretical reflections

As an introduction to what I consider to be the important contribution of Ferrarotti (1983), it is perhaps worth recalling Mathias Finger's (1989) review of four approaches to life histories, although I would wish to distance myself from some of his more polemical conclusions.

The first of these approaches is oral history and cultural anthropology, where biographies are seen as representing a given culture. As a result, life histories are seen, according to Finger, as an important device for researching cultures gradually 'fading away' such as, for instance, peasant culture. Finger stresses that, in this approach the subject does not vanish, although the concern

of the social researcher lies mainly with the cultural values of the community. *Les Récits de Vie* by Poirier, Clapier-Valladon and Raybaut (which will be mentioned further on) is an example of a study which Finger sees as characterising this approach.

The Chicago School constitutes the second approach to life histories. Given its concerns with a society going through deep changes, life histories are used, in this perspective, to detect social problems and, in this way, to contribute to ameliorating life in society. As a result, it is expected that, in addition to presenting accurately social 'problems', life histories will show explicit concerns with representativeness as well as with avoiding biased views. Finger stresses that there are clear tensions in this perspective in its use of life histories. In their emphasis to analyse a changing society, theorists from the Chicago School did not create the analytical categories necessary to express social change. Further, the status of the subject is ambiguous since it is assumed that it can by itself reflect changes taking place in society, at the same time they appear to have no concern for the subject's own subjectivity.

The third approach which Finger presents is the "sociologie du cours de la vie" by Bertaux. In Bertaux's use of life histories it seems clear that the search is for the underlying structures which produce the trajectories and, indeed, the whole lives of subjects. Life histories are seen as techniques for studying social structures and their laws. Bertaux, significantly, calls his approach as "structuralist-positiviste" (Finger 1989:236). The subject is seen just as a product of the social structure and as a consequence, according to Finger, there is, once again, no role for subjectivity in this approach.

The fourth approach is made up of the contributions by Franco Ferrarotti which Finger considers "the most important theorist of the biographical method" (Finger 1989:239). After a period where his main concerns were in tune with the Chicago School using life histories to illustrate the human and social consequences of the industrialisation process, Ferrarotti has changed his perspective in order to establish what he terms the "autonomy of the biographical method".

Given the relevance of Ferrarotti's contribution to my work, I will review in some detail his perspective. In *Histoire et Histoires de Vie* (1983), he distances from an approach where life histories are used to provide pertinent information not found in archives (see, for instance, Aron-Schnapper & Hanet 1978) and where those who are the 'subjects' of life histories are mere "witnesses" of events, people and places (Purvis 1987 provides some illustration of this perspective). Ferrarotti also wishes to distance himself from a view where the biographied person "represents" the 'world view' of a specific social or professional group.

Instead, Ferrarotti stresses the contribution of life histories to a "methodological renovation, which is necessary given the generalised crisis of the heuristic instruments of sociology". In his view, there are "an increasing number of sophisticated techniques which [however] do not correspond to any increase in real sociological knowledge" (1983:79). After having criticised the dominant positivist perspectives in Social Sciences, Ferrarotti demonstrates the capacities of the biographical method in identifying the subjectivity of actors, clarifying the interactive role of both the person being studied and the researcher. Further,

he also distances himself from research which remains "hostage to official versions" (1983:46), based on data produced in institutions taking for granted the basic assumptions of society, instead of making use of critical commentary, of demystifying perspectives established by a dominant order. In this sense, Ferrarotti wants to stress the heuristic possibilities of life histories, taking advantage of their "explosive subjectivity" (1983:50). This is his most important, and controversial, contribution to the matter and its meaning is clarified below.

Ferrarotti attempts to demonstrate how the biographical method can produce scientific knowledge. Marx's VI thesis on Feuerbach - where it is stated that "the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each separate individual (...) In its reality, it is the *ensemble* (aggregate) of social relations"[2] - supports, according to Ferrarotti, the idea that sociology may have as its object of study, individual human life in a way that is distinct from psychology. Therefore, on the basis that each individual constitutes "the active and individualised synthesis of a society" (1983:51), Ferrarotti is able to stress that one can expect to be confronted with the "explosive subjectivity" of life histories: the active way, in which the individual translates, filters and re-structures the social processes which he/she confronts, results in a particular subjectivity.

Three main concepts taken from Sartre are central to his argument: "totalising praxis", "dialectical reason" and a "theory of mediations".

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[2] Since Ferrarotti's quotation of the VI thesis on Feuerbach is in French, I am using the quotation from *Marx in his own words*, by Ernst Fisher (1968:155), London: Penguin.

With the first, he wants to stress that human agency is as important as social conditions are to an understanding of human life. It is human praxis, which not only internalises social rules, but also filters, de-structures and re-structures them (1983:52). This argument is very close to Sartre's statement:

> What is important is not what has been made from man (sic), but what he (sic) does from what structures have made of him. (...) What man makes is history itself, the overcoming of these structures in a totalising praxis (Sartre, quoted in Cunha 1982:123, emphasis added).

Secondly, it is through "dialectical reason" that biography is related to the social system (and vice-versa), in a "horizontal" (synchronic) and "vertical" (diachronic), reading. In this way, the path is constructed from a "science of the particular and subjective" to the universal. This proposal of Ferrarotti also follows Sartre (in *Questions de la Méthode* and *La Critique de la Raison Dialectique*). An author such as Moravia considers that the Sartrian notion of "dialectical reason" is close to "understanding" ("verstehen") which "does not aim to dissolve an individual human act in the network of analytical procedures established by the natural sciences" (Moravia 1985:99). It seems, therefore, that neither Sartre nor Ferrarotti adopt the "epistemological break" with common sense that Bachelard proposes. However, there is no attempt either to make the subject and the object of knowledge coincide or to reduce knowldege to practice or to lived experience ("vécu"). On the contrary, the attempt is to relate individual biography to the objective conditions in which the human being is located (and these conditions are defined as structural, as capitalist relations of production).

Thus, Ferrarotti stresses, thirdly, that in each individual it is not the totality of social relations that can be found, but only those related to a specific context of class relations. For that reason, it is necessary to construct a "theory and typology of social mediations" (Ferrarotti 1983:61), in which the various spaces of mediation (such as the family, peer group, neighbourhood, 'workplace' relations, etc) can establish articulation between the specificity of an individual life and the universality of the social system. It is through the various spaces of mediation just mentioned that the 'biography of the primary group' can be established. In that way, it is possible to avoid atomism and "psychological reductionism".

This perspective is considered by Ferrarotti as a "rupture" with dominant perspectives in the Social Sciences. Firstly, it questions basic assumptions, in particular, the involvement of the researcher and the complex relationship between the researcher and the person interviewed. Secondly, it consists of a "critical compromise" towards those who have been marginalised by History. There are two main concerns which frame his "critical compromise". On the one hand, he wants to distance himself from a rhetoric claiming "to give voice to those condemned by history" but which, at the same time, loses any possibility of distinguishing between personal choices and scientific acquisitions (1983:92). On the other hand, there is a rejection of "violating the private spaces" of those who have been importuned by sociologists, anthropologists, statisticians and social workers - the poor, the marginalised, primitive tribes, underdeveloped people, all those who have been defined as ideal objects of research. "They are the least able to retaliate" (1983:152). With these two concerns in

mind, Ferrarotti assumes that life histories may reveal "human exploitation" in the context of capitalist relations of production. In his view, exploitation means "not only the selling of labour at a low and unjust salary, but mainly the artificial blockage of the total potential of self-development of any human being" (1983:160).

Thirdly, his perspective appears as a 'rupture' also with regard to both traditional and (at least, some) marxist traditions concerning the 'subject of history'. As already stressed, his aim is that the subject re-enters history, in opposition to the structural perspective of Althusser, for instance, of a "history without a subject". Ferrarotti supports a "notion of history as 'historical life'", with all its economic, social and psycho-anthropological conditions. In their complex articulation, these conditions give rise to "a relational dialectic which cannot be known or anticipated theoretically" (Ferrarotti 1983:183). History must take into account the point of view of those who are "in a subordinate position and whose contributions to it are valid" (1983:187) and thus it is clear that, in his view, history is not made solely by élites. The subject of history for Ferrarotti's theory appears to be those "marginalised from history". This is a definition which, on the one hand, rules out history made by elites. On the other hand, his concept of the 'subject of history' does not coincide with the concept of the working class *tout court*, and in that sense he distances himself from authors in the humanist tradition, such as E. P.Thompson, for whom the subject is the working class, considered as an "active historical subject" or Lukács who sees this social class as the "creative subject of history".

To sum up, Ferrarotti wants above all to privilege the relevance of life histories. He thinks that it is through the "explosive subjectivity" of life histories that new models for interpretation can be generated, able to break with the cycle of confirmation of theories.

There are, however, some tensions and ambiguities in Ferrarotti's theory which need to be considered. I have mentioned some of them elsewhere (Araújo 1990). Here I would like to return to Ferrarotti's concepts of "lived experience" and of the "individual".

In his view, the inclusion of *subjectivity* in Social Sciences is crucial to overcome "the fetishism of empirical data". Ferrarotti stresses the role of human agency in the construction of history. In terms similar to Thompson (1978), it is *experience* that Ferrarotti wants to privilege, related to class structure, understood both "as structural location and specific lived experience ('vécu')" (1983:45). However, the use of the category *experience* involves some tensions. As Perry Anderson (1980) stresses (in his critical appraisal of Thompson), there is an ambiguity concerning its use. On the one hand, it means a specific and subjective way of living an event by each social being. On the other hand, *experience* is also used to refer to the way human attitudes change after an event during their lives. Hence, it is necessary to clarify which meaning is being used. One may be using the first meaning, when it is the second that is being assumed. The first meaning points to a specific way of knowing subjectively, and this is clearly Ferrarotti's intention. If the second is also accepted, then it slides into a notion of human learning following specific events. As Anderson (1980) stresses, there is nothing that

can assure that a change of attitude necessarily follows a specific experience, according to specific ethical aims. Many human actions are not able to bring about social change. This is an important reminder that we need to keep in mind when stressing the importance of subjectivity in sociological analyses.

The other point I would like to address is the use by Ferrarotti of the category of the 'individual'. Within the debates between humanists, structuralists and post-structuralists addressing theories of the 'subject', his preference for the notion of "individual", instead of "subject", is a clear demonstration of the Sartrian influence in his work. Structuralists share with Foucault the "de-centring of the subject", denying a philosophy of the subject guided by its consciousness in achieving the aims designed by him/her. In a different tradition, Giddens presents the "theory of structuration" of the subject. He supports the argument that "structure is both medium and outcome of the reproduction of practices. Structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices, and 'exists' in the generating moments of this constitution" (Giddens 1979:5). Further, he adds:

> (...) all social agents are knowledgeable about the social systems which they constitute and reproduce in their action (...) all actors have some degree of *discursive penetration* of the social systems to whose constitution they contribute; (...) however subordinate an actor may be in a social relationship, the very fact of involvement in that relationship gives him or her a certain amount of power over the other. Those in subordinate positions in social systems are frequently adept at converting whatever resources they possess into some degree of control over the conditions of reproduction of those social systems (1979:5-6).

Thus, different traditions choose the concept 'subject' to emphasise either the power of structures in its construction or the importance of considering both structure and the control that

actors have on the resources which are close to them. In a contrasting way, the accent on the notion of "individual" by Ferrarotti (also present in the expression "dialectic of individual-society") appears to echo the notion of a free, rational individual, supported by the liberal tradition. Hence, it seems that some tension is evident in his work, as a result of the fact that individuals only exist in and through social relations.

Some considerations of life histories of women teachers

A more conventional perspective on life histories, mentioned above, is relevant to this project, for instance concerning data on relations within school, between the school and the 'community', the control of teachers' work, and so on. Undoubtedly, these life histories of women teachers will yield detailed information about their lives as active participants in their 'workplace', the school, as well as spectators of a construction of citizenship which excluded them in many respects (such as with regard to the right to vote).

However, Ferrarotti's emphasis on *subjectivity*, in spite of the reservations raised above, is quite important for this thesis. As I have already stressed, it is not only women teachers' life pathways which are of importance here. Their *experience* as teachers, including how they saw and perceived their position at work as well as their situation as women, is interesting for several reasons. Firstly, because they were marginalised from the construction of a public discourse about schooling and many aspects of the construction of citizenship. 'Classical' history has hidden them and was uninterested in the testimony of their

experience. As mentioned previously, it is important to the perspective of this thesis that one listen to the *voices* of those who have been previously denied the possibility of being heard. Secondly, and in accord with Margaret Nelson (1992), I believe that Women's History has been disregarded: "Public history often ignores minority views. But women's lives are further hidden because important information is overlooked, consciously avoided, or distorted". Thirdly, reference to the experience of women teachers is another means of making their contribution visible in the construction of State education. Finally, their views help us to understand the real meaning of patriarchal relations to their lives, how these relations changed and how this process of change was perceived by them. It is the specificity of their lives as women in teaching that it is important to reveal, "the private nature of so much of women's lives" as Nelson describes it (Nelson 1992:168).

IV - The Doing of Life Histories

The quite recent concern in the Social Sciences with pursuing research in qualitative terms does not mean that there are no proceedings to be followed in collecting and interpreting life histories. Several authors give detailed indications of the method they defend (for instance, Plummer 1983; Poirier *et al.* 1983). This is not the place to elaborate in detail on the procedures that need to be followed in doing life histories. I will only clarify some of the procedures I chose with regard to collecting and interpreting life histories of women teachers.

The first question I want to raise deals with the number of life histories necessary to accomplish the aims of my project.

In fact, the question of *how many* persons to interview is a question that crops up constantly in similar projects. As Ferrarotti (1983:87) stresses, this question may lead to reductionism: "the *number* of biographies replaces the *character* of exemplarity" (emphasis added). In his view, a life history is in itself valuable since the central aim is to reveal the subjectivity which a life history can express. Each provides a genuine view of the world and of the conditions in which each informant sees him/herself located. Bertaux (1981:37) suggests a different criterion which he terms "saturation of knowledge": the researcher should stop when he/she learns nothing new, and, on the contrary, starts to hear repetitions. In the present research, I had the opportunity of meeting five women teachers and, although each of their life histories was exemplary and specific, I was also attracted by the diversity of their pathways and different subjectivities. I did not want to lose the opportunity of telling their life histories, in their commonalities and at the same time in their diversity.

The second issue that I would like to address is how I established contact with the five women teachers. This was through friends, colleagues and students who knew of retired women teachers over 80 years of age with good memories and who had taught since their twenties. These were the three main criteria for approaching them as I quickly realised that other criteria (such as political and feminist orientations) were difficult to meet. There were not many still alive and able to pass on their testimony. Having said this, the question remains whether as a result of this process of networking only women teachers from specific social origin were contacted. The fact that none of

them were of peasant origins, which one might expect from Mónica's statements (mentioned in chapters 6 & 7), raises the question of the possible existence of subtle and invisible processes that may have operated in gaining access to these women teachers. Indeed, people kind enough to give me the contacts required were of middle class origin. Nevertheless, the important thing to stress is that the five women teachers were not all of the same social class.

The third issue regards safeguarding the anonymity of these women teachers in this research. The names have been changed and I have omitted some information which was too personal and that I felt would interfere with their lives in an abusive way.

In gathering the data, I went to see each of the five women teachers several times, and, depending on how the relationship was developing, I spent more hours with some than with others. I recorded the interviews, except with the first woman who was reluctant to let me tape her, so I took notes. The total length of interviews ranged from fifteen hours in some cases, to forty hours. Although I had a questionnaire to remind me of the central questions and concerns of this thesis, many moments were completely unstructured allowing the person to speak about her unique experiences and thoughts. At other moments, I took a more directive role, asking some questions which were relevant to revive their memories about the experience of the Republic and the Military Dictatorship. Still, at others, I chose a middle road, attempting to stimulate the memory of my interviewee by introducing relevant historical details. Above all, I tried to be empathetic and non-judgemental.

The other issue to be addressed is the construction of the life histories. Once the transcriptions were completed, I spent between forty and fifty hours working on each of the accounts of women teachers in order to reconstruct their life histories. As the first teacher's account was not recorded but based on my notes, it took me less time to construct her life history in written form (I recognise here that this may have reduced the detail of the actual life history).

All the life histories were constructed following the procedures set up by Poirier *et al.* (1983)[3]. In particular, it needs to be stated that each woman teacher's account was re-arranged thematically and chronologically, under categories which were based generally on her own words. The aim of this re-construction is, as Poirier *et al* (1983:119) stress: "to find the logic and the intrinsic meanings of the experience of the person in question, in order to present her to the reader". The five life histories are included in the appendices of this thesis.

In this chapter, as already stressed, the intention is to present the voices and perspectives of the five women teachers, attempting to make sense of what they have told me. However, I have been selective as I could not present their views on every topic we discussed. I interpret what they have said, sometimes through my writing, others through their own words. I also selected the meanings that were more relevant for them. There is an attempt here to maintain the viewpoint, expression and perspective of each woman teacher, while at the same time, through my writing, to develop an insightful and accurate

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[3] Instead of using cut and paste as advised by Poirier *et al* (1983), the work of composition ('montage') was done with a word processor.

presentation of these women teachers' world views when I think that this is useful and adequate.

Undoubtedly, the problem of the analysis of life histories reveals a clear dilemma: as a sociologist of education, many theories could be used in the analysis of their accounts "imposing the theory upon the understanding of the subject" (Plummer 1983:113); at the same time, how should I proceed to keep the subject's own perspective and world view? Plummer (1983) presents five forms of relating both researcher' and subject's accounts through what he calls a 'continuum of contamination'[4]. Amongst these, the 'systematic thematic analysis' seems most relevant to my work, which is defined by Plummer as:

> (...) the subject is more or less allowed to speak for him or herself but where the sociologist slowly accumulates a series of themes - partly derived from the subject's account and partly derived from sociological theory (Plummer 1983:114).

This kind of analysis is in fact an attempt to interpret the accounts of the five women teachers according to their own perspectives while, at the same time, bearing in mind sociological/feminist concerns. Thus, some of the categories of these life histories have been created because they emerged from the concerns of both interviewee and researcher. However, in other cases, categories (such as the isolation in remote villages or the importance of the final primary school exam) have emerged from the subjects' accounts without a clear correspondence in the former concerns of the researcher and, as a result, more categories

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[4] The five categories are: the subject's 'pure account', edited personal documents, systematic thematic analysis, verification by anecdote (exampling) and the sociologist's 'pure account' (see Plummer 1983:113).

have been inscribed to give account of these women teachers' issues.

Clearly, the concern was not one of detailing every aspect of their lives. Liz Stanley expresses this in an interesting way:

> The conventional model of biography production is one which can be likened to the effect of a 'microscope': the more information about the subject you collect, the closer to the 'truth' - the 'whole picture' - you get. (...) I found that the microscope approach was inappropriate (...) it misses out from biography many of the salient factors which helped me to understanding this complex woman. (...) A more appropriate and less scientific metaphor (...) is to see biography as a 'kaleidoscope'. // A reflexive biography rejects the 'truth' in favour of 'it all depends', on how you look and precisely what you look at and when you look at it. This is the 'kaleidoscope' effect: you look and you see one fascinatingly complex pattern; the light changes or you accidently move or you deliberately shake the kaleidoscope and you see - composed by the same elements - a somewhat different pattern (Stanley 1992:158/178).

I see the metaphor of the 'kaleidoscope' presented by Stanley as crucial to an understanding of women's lives and a way of contributing most adequately to Women's History. The concerns and topics of this field of study can be brought in to look at the lives of these women teachers. It is an attempt to see their lives in a new light, one that 'classical' history has refused. As Antoinette Burton has stressed: "history is not simply what happened in the past but, more pointedly, the kinds of *knowledge* about the past that we are *made aware of*" (Burton 1992:26, emphasis in the text).

In the next section, the five women teachers mentioned in the first pages of this chapter, will be presented more thoroughly in order to set the scene for the presentation of their life histories.

V - Getting to know Teresa, Laura, Ana, Isaura and Luisa

Teresa is the youngest of the five women. She was born one month after the onset of the First Portuguese Republic (1910). In her family, there were clear affinities with the republican regime, in particular from her father. She received two clear messages in her family education which she actively reworked: the importance of education and 'instruction' for transforming social lives and the relevance of work outside the domestic household for women's autonomy. In many ways, she represents the republican woman teacher. Although her teacher education and training was during the Military Dictatorship, the republican legacy of education and the separation of Church and State was appropriated and used several times as a way of resisting the pressures of the authoritarian regime.

Laura is some years older than Teresa. Although her family owned land (many of the members worked directly on the land), she was the only one who took a degree. She was very much involved in teaching and in sorting out the school achievements of her pupils. In particular, she allowed several girls to board at her house whose families asked Laura to educate them as her daughters and to prepare them sucessfully for the final examination of the primary school. For quite some time she had an Austrian girl living with her, in the aftermath of the WW II, without knowing any word of German and the girl, any of Portuguese.

Ana is the only one (among the five) who has always lived in the North-East of the country. Only when she retired, did she move to Oporto to live with her family. Thus, she was confronted

with some of the most difficult conditions of the expansion of mass schooling during her professional life. She only taught in village schools, far from the main towns. She became a widow quite young, and has never remarried. Although her husband's family owned land locally, she experienced economic difficulties in educating her children. Among the five women teachers, she is probably the one who stresses most emphatically, with regard to the times of her young adulthood, the lack of choice of occupations for girls other than teaching, and how much this has conditioned her life.

Isaura, like Ana, was born in the first year of this century. She came from a rich republican landowning family (who did not work on the land). Her parents had sixteen children and for them it was clear, firstly, that the family land was not going to provide enough resources for their future lives. Secondly, in her adolescence, it became increasingly accepted that girls should have a more extended form of formal education in order to get a job. Thus, both circumstances had a great influence in her coming to Oporto to attend the first girls' lyceum in the town, followed by the attendance of the Teacher College. She married young but divorced some years later in 1929. For many years she struggled financially to support herself and her three children in the villages where she taught. Only when she came to a town could she find other paid activities, besides teaching, to improve somewhat their standards of living.

Luisa is the eldest of the five. Like Teresa, she stresses her opposition towards the authoritarian regime. For many years, her professional life was structured around the needs of her children: applying for a teaching post when her older son started

primary school, and leaving teaching when her younger daughter finished primary school. She only returned to teaching when she made a solitary decision to pay for her son pursuing his university course in Coimbra.

This brief presentation is a form of stressing the specificity of the lives of these women teachers. Undoubtedly, many other features of their lives could be presented. In the following section, their pathways and subjectivities are addressed in a more detailed and systematic way. Their words are used many times; in others, I attempt to present accurately what they have said to me about the construction of their lives. My own comments are presented using italic characters to make a clear distinction between both kinds of discourses.

VI - Career Pathways and Contexts of Professional and Family Lives

It is through women's pathways and the contexts in which they have developed that we gain some sense of "the private nature of so much of women's lives". " Private" meaning what they did in the household, as well as what they did in the 'workplace' but remained almost invisible, because as women their work was not *seen*. They were in schools teaching, but it was as if their work did not exist. It was neither mentioned nor were their voices heard. Even for women teachers who were political and militant feminists, we know too little about their lives. Deolinda Lopes Vieira was one example. She was an anarchist and a feminist but even in her case, her life has remained 'private'. Fortunately, she was interviewed by the Portuguese historian António Candeias, when she was already in her late nineties evoking her involvement

in the maintenance of 'Escola Oficna nº1' (a school guided by libertarian ideals) as well as her militancy in the political scene (cf. Candeias 1992)[5].

- **the teachers' family and social origin**

The five teachers were born between 1899 and 1910, in the North of Portugal and some of them in remote places or small towns near the frontier with Spain. Their lives probably illustrate the movement of specific social groups from the rural parts of the country in search of employment in the service sector in towns situated in the coastal zone.

The social origins of four of them can be located in the middle classes. The fathers of Isaura and Laura were landowners. Luisa's father owned a bakery. Teresa's father was a lecturer in a Teacher College. Their mothers owned land (with different sized plots), although their husbands were legally the admnistrators, thus relegating them to the role of housekeepers. The fifth woman teacher, Ana, came from the lower-middle classes. Her father was a sargeant in the GNR (National Republican Guard, a branch of the armed forces created by the Republic) and her mother worked hard in the household since there were nine children.

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[5] António Candeias kindly allowed me to read the interview with Deolinda L. Vieira before presenting his thesis. The interview was carried out in 1985. Deolinda Vieira told him that when she was still a sutent at the Teacher College, she often went to 'Escola Oficina nº1' as a kind of 'teacher trainee' as she puts it. She considered herself as a libertarian. Kropotkine was an author familiar to her. She married the anarchist journalist Pinto Quartim, who worked for in newspapers such as *A Batalha* (often mentioned in chapter 8). In the interview, she stressed that she was militant before being aquainted with her future husband. Both participated in the 1907 strikes against the Monarchy. She was enthusiastic about the Bolsheviks at the time, but she adds, as a comment: "Unfortunately in those days there were no Sakharovs!". Although she was a political militant, she was undoubtedly confronted with similar conditions to other women, and in particular women teachers, such that she took her daughter into school when she was only one month old to breastfeed her.

Three of them were born into large families with many children. For instance, in Isaura's family, there were sixteen children. Laura and Ana each had nine brothers and sisters. Especially in the cases of Isaura and Laura, as will be seen below, the size of the family played some role in the fact that, in their adult lives, as women, they worked outside the household. The families of Teresa and Luisa consisted of fewer children (between four to six).

Their childhood and adolescence were lived during the Republic, at least partially, and the position of their families regarding the political regime is worth noting. In three of these families, there was sympathy for the Republic and even active militancy in republican parties. For instance, Isaura's family was republican. She stresses that her parents and all her maternal and paternal uncles were republicans who graduated from Coimbra University. One of her uncles was the civil governor of a northern district, during the republican regime and was confronted by the monarchist uprisings and invasions by Portuguese who took refuge in Spain during the Republic. Another was a militant, a friend of Afonso Costa before the Republic, but became later his political rival. He was a lawyer. He was murdered mysteriously, after an incident with a leading republican member, at a railway station. She also remembers her aunt as a member of the Portuguese Women's Republican League (mentioned in chapter 8).

Teresa's father, a lecturer in a Teacher College, was also a close republican sympathiser. His daughter mentions him with great admiration for his impressive knowledge and experience of teaching and education as well as his republicanism. She even remembers an episode when the monarchists took power for a

short period in 1919, to which I refer in chapter 5 ('Monarquia do Norte', Monarchy of the North). Republicans were beaten and tortured in a public theatre, at Oporto, while a pianist was playing. Her father was headmaster of a primary school in this town, where the family was living. She was nine years old. One night, the police came with orders that on the following day he should hand over the republican flag to the new authorities who wanted to get rid of them from schools. She can remember her father very calmly telling the family that he would not obey. The pupils in his school continued to sing the republican hymn every morning which was also forbidden. When the republicans defeated the monarchists some weeks later, there was a big popular celebration in the school and in the neighbourhood where the people marched with her father in their arms. The republican flag which, during this period, had been kept in their house, in a hiding place, was raised amidst songs and fireworks.

Ana does not describe her father as a republican militant. She always talks about him with admiration as a hard worker and someone with a real sense of the importance of formal education for his children. However, as a member of the republican military guard, he was most probably a republican sympathiser, although he would not have been able to make these feelings apparent in a town in the North-East of the country, where anti-republicanism was often quite strong.

Generally, their mothers were not concerned with politics. Isaura's mother, however, is introduced as being just as concerned about republicanism as her husband:

"My parents were both republicans and very liberal".

Both her parents came from families involved in the struggle for liberalism in the first part of the nineteenth century. Luisa and Teresa's mothers are described as having close relationships with the Catholic Church. Teresa's mother, despite the fact that her husband was a republican sympathiser and agnostic, educated the children within the Catholic Church. Neither Teresa nor Luisa are practising Catholics nowadays. Neither is religiosity presented as a specific trait of the other two. They were perceived as hard working women. In general, the main concern of the mothers of these five teachers remained within the household in different ways. For instance, Teresa's mother is presented in this way:

> "My mother was a housewife, she was, as I used to say, a lady of the nineteenth-century. (...) She did not agree that I should work outside the household."

This implies not only her traditional views on many matters, but also her social status as someone who could afford domestic servants and supervise their domestic routine. In contrast, Ana's mother was always working in the household attempting to present her children as clean and looking proper. Ana says that:

> "My mother worked very much in the home. She was very courageous. She never went outside. When I was a child, I even thought that she did not know how to go outside. (...) She was always working, doing the household duties".

These teachers also make special reference to their sisters. Sisters were not only their partners in many activities appropriate for girls, but also, in the case of three of these teachers, their primary teachers. Isaura, Ana and Teresa were taught by older sisters in the local State school. Ana's three

sisters became primary teachers; as did at least two of Isaura's; and one of Teresa's.

It is also worth noticing that the five women teachers were raised in small villages or small towns. Some of them explicitly refer to the political atmosphere of the place where they were born or lived as hostile to republicanism. Luisa remembers such sentiments in the town where she was born:

> "(...) the atmosphere was sanctimonious and people lived in fear of republicans. In my house, the only newspaper which was read was controlled by the Catholic Church. Although the Jesuits had been expelled, they maintained their influence in many families. When there were political meetings in town, all the windows in my house were closed, because my mother was afraid of republicans".

The other town where she attended the Teacher College (Castelo Branco) exhibited equally "anti-republican feelings". Hence, none of these teachers found republicanism present in the places where they were born, unlike the situation in Lisbon and Oporto. However, Teresa came to Oporto to attend the primary school and experienced life in a town with republican feelings (with the exception of the incidents of 'Monarquia do Norte').

Diversity, as well as some homogeneity, can be found in the social background of these five women teachers. They came from the middle and lower-middle classes. All of them had mothers who were housewives; however, they had a significant number of sisters who were primary school teachers. Their origin in these social groups is in fact worth noticing. None of these women teachers came from the poor peasantry, and in that sense the argument of Mónica (1978), mentioned in former chapters, is

not supported by these findings. However this sample is small and it cannot serve as a rejection of Mónica's argument.

Diversity in their families can also be found with regard to political affiliations. Republican involvement of some of them constrasted with the fears of republicanism or a sense of remoteness with regard to it. The fact that they were born and lived significant parts of their lives in the interior of the country can be related to their attitude to republicanism since this political regime gained support mainly among the urban lower middle and middle classes of Lisbon, Oporto and Coimbra.

. formal education: profiting from republican innovations

All of them attended the local state primary school, some of them in the last years of the Monarchy: Luisa around 1906, Isaura and Ana, 1908. However, Laura started primary school in 1913 and Teresa, in 1917, that is, after the onset of the Republic. As already stressed, the development of a school network, in particular of girls' schools, was visible at the turn of the century and the families of these girls benefited from this fact allowing them to send their children to local schools. Even the well-off, such as the parents of Isaura, who were "rich landowners" and Luisa, whose father was an industrialist and her mother owned a farm, sent their daughters to local state primary schools.

Later on their formal education surely profited from the Republic. Teresa completed the fifth year of primary schooling (the Republic extended compulsory primary schooling to five years, in 1919). Laura attended a 'higher primary school' ('escola primária superior', created in 1919), at Braga, before entering the Teacher College. Ana and Isaura went to high school (lyceum) in Bragança

and Oporto. Ana stresses that, in the town where she lived, in the North East of the country, girls' entry to the lyceum caused 'great admiration':

> "(...) in the year I entered the lyceum there was great admiration and astonishment in town because 24 girls entered the lyceum to attend the 1st year. It was the talk of the town. I was ten years old. This was in 1911, it was already during the Republic."

Isaura came to Oporto to attend the first girls' lyceum established there, by the Republic, in 1914.

In contrast, Luisa's family, fearing republicanism and its agnosticism, sent her to a convent school in a Spanish town near the frontier (Ciudad Rodrigo), where almost all the pupils were Portuguese. She was sent back by 1915, when the economic crisis deepened with World War I.

The five women teachers entered Teacher College through different routes. Isaura completed the fifth grade of the lyceum and entered directly. Laura prepared herself for entry from the higher primary school. Ana, Teresa and Luisa sat the entrance examination.

They attended college in different towns and at different times. Luisa and Ana before the 1919 reorganisation of teachers' education (1915-1918 and 1916-1919, at Castelo Branco and Bragança respectively). Isaura and Laura attended post-reorganisation (1919-1922 and 1923-26, at Oporto and Braga). Teresa attended during the first years of the Military Dictatorship (1926-1929, at Braga). All of them were able to complete their courses in three years and qualified as teachers.

It is worth considering their impressions and memories of the Teacher College they attended. They can still remember the

names of many of the lecturers and what they taught. Ana, Isaura and Laura seem the most satisfied with the education provided in terms of its quality and preparation for their future teaching. Ana underlines that

> "I liked attending the Teacher College, I felt good there".

In her opinion, some of the lecturers demonstrated quality in teaching. Isaura and Laura both praised the theatrical and singing activities and shows which the students of the College used to present both in their own town and others. Laura has a huge photograph showing the students on the occasion of one of these shows, all wearing traditional costumes. She is among them. Isaura also very much enjoyed gymnastics and playing basketball in the school team.

However, Luisa and Teresa seem critical of much of the teaching in the College. Luisa sees it as inadequate, lacking in quality, with the exception of two or three subjects. She could not understand what was being taught in one of the main subjects: Pedagogics. She also thinks that the teaching had no connection whatsoever with republican discourse. She was "rebellious" as a student and was known also as a joker and ironic person. Therefore, she did not conform with the practices adopted by the school, even in the republican commemoration of the "Dia da Árvore" (the day of the tree). She did not participate during her attendance. Some teachers, such as her teacher trainer, refused to put her in charge of classes:

> "We had to give lessons to the children of the primary school (it was called 'escola anexa'). The woman teacher in charge never called me to give the lessons. I think that she was afraid of me, I was known for being a 'joker', at least in her words. I used to have an independent mind".

The school lacked resources: there was no library nor workshops. The school consisted only of some rooms with tables and long benches.

Teresa is also critical of many of the features of her College at Braga. Her general appraisal of the quality of teaching is negative. Only a few teachers are mentioned as setting a good example. Among them, she mentions her father:

> "In the Teacher College the quality of teaching was not good at all. With the exception of few lecturers. My father, for instance, he was an exceptional person. What I was taught there had no great value. The lecturer of Pedagogics did not know how to teach. In another course, we talked among ourselves since the only thing that concerned the lecturer was that we spoke quietly and not disturb the other classes".

Several lecturers were from the military. Teresa adds other information concerning her performance in the classes she was in charge of during the teaching training ('escolas anexas'):

> "I had the ability to teach, for that reason it was easy to teach during my training. I performed well. I was very much at ease. My colleagues, older than I, they even cried when they had to enter the classes, plenty of children, all the desks with children during the teaching training. To have to talk to them, to contact them, to teach them, some cried. I remember having seen it. Some used to give children sweets in order that they would be quiet. This was even worse."

Although the women interviewed remember willingly their good grades at the end of the course (16 and 18 out of 20, for three of these women, a good mark at the time), Teresa was the only one who wanted to describe in detail her final examination in the College. Friends, colleagues and the family were present. She had to teach a class for one whole school day, around a theme (called a 'centre of interest') integrating Portuguese, History, etc. She was successful, but the examiner was a lecturer not renowned for his competence, at least in her view. Both she and her father thought

that she was undervalued. Her father retired afterwards from his post as lecturer in the College due partly to this.

There is unanimity among the five women that there was close control in the College of the social interaction between male and female students. The *1911 Education Reform Act* stressed that Teacher Colleges were co-educational. In some cases, students of both sexes were taught together, but recreation was separate. Such was the case of the Colleges in Castelo Branco and Bragança. Ana stresses that women would be kept in the classroom, while the men were sent outside. In the College at Oporto, after 1919, the two sexes were taught separately and it was difficult to them to meet. Isaura stresses that women were strictly controlled with regard to dress and behaviour. A colleague of hers was invited to leave the College due to the way she dressed and used make-up, which was forbidden.

> "They (the director and lecturers) were too strict with the way girls should dress and behave. In those days, a girl should not wear make-up. For instance, I remember a colleague of mine who used to dress gaudily and to make-up in an extravagant way. She was called to the director who was very strict. He used to think that girls should not look at boys. He told her either to dress in a different way and to give up the make-up or to leave the College. She left the course. Indeed, she was much too extravagant. In those days, there was a feeling that women teachers should not dress and behave in these ways in the classroom".

Moreover, relations between the two sexes were monitored closely. She remembers being summoned by the director of the College. He was very strict about the relationships between the sexes, guided by notions that "girls should not look at boys". He saw her with her boyfriend outside the College. She was reprimanded.

It is interesting to note that four out of the five women teachers benefited directly from the innovations of the republican period at the level of post-primary schooling. It is a useful contrast to make against the sense of stagnation that we get from statistical evidence as well as in accounts of republican policies in education.

Nevertheless, if there were more opportunities for girls during their childhood and youth, these were tightly regulated. All of them had memories of strict controls concerning the model of 'true womanhood' they should adopt or the proper distance to be kept between them and the male sex.

. the 'choice' of teaching as a career

Among the five women teachers, there was a clear notion that they had to make a living for different reasons. The parents of Isaura were rich landowners. However, since they had sixteen children, they were aware that the land would not provide a living for all the children. Therefore, the daughters needed an education to earn a living as well. Whilst the two older daughters did not study, the younger ones did. The notion that women could and should work outside the household (even in social groups with economic resources) was more underlined within the context provided by the Republic and the debates promoted by women' groups on their right to work. Isaura is the most impressive advocate of the importance of women's autonomy. She stresses that:

> "Work provides us with great independence. I felt this always throughout my life".

I will return to this below in more detail, when approaching women teachers' *subjectivities*. Laura's situation was like Isaura's concerning her parents' perception that the land would not be enough to provide for the future lives of their descendants.

Teresa's father played a crucial role with regard to this question pleading for Teresa's professional work against his wife's judgement since he supported the idea that women should be autonomous and work outside the household. Ana's parents wanted to provide all nine children with "a position", which definitely meant to be able to get a certificate to enter the 'non-manual' world of work. In fact, they have fulfilled this ambition. Her daughter stresses the formidable achievement of her parents, given their economic difficulties.

For the reasons already stated, it could be expected that these women teachers did not support a homogenous view of any special vocation for teaching. Teresa and Laura are probably the two who most clearly saw teaching as their 'vocation'. Teresa quite often mentions her ability to teach small children. This does not mean that she believes in a 'natural gift'; instead, it is her proximity with school life during childhood and adolescence, through her attendance of her sister's classes in the local primary school, as well as the talks and debates with her father, that explains her facility in teaching:

> "I was not frightened at all during the teacher training to enter the classroom with plenty of children. I was completely at ease. Probably this can be explained because I used to attend the classes of my eldest sister who was a teacher in the village. For me, the school ambiance was something quite familiar. My teacher training was successful".

However, teaching was chosen by the other three for different reasons. Ana clearly recognises that job opportunities for girls were scarce in her time.

> "Three of my sisters became primary teachers, with me we were four. My younger sister became a primary teacher due to her vocation. My elder sister was very clever, an exceptional student, she wanted that the lecturers gave her the maximum grade (20)".

According to Ana, the opportunities for girls was so scarce that even her eldest sister became a primary teacher. She was so brilliant that she expected to obtain the highest grade (20 out of 20) at the end of her course at College. The lecturer in charge of her assessment said that he only agreed to grant the maximum mark to someone who knew more than he did; someone who knew as much as he did would have less (19 out of 20). She got 19 as a final mark. Her cleverness is also measured by the time she spent reading:

> "She used to read so much that quickly all the books of the small librairies of Bragança were quickly read".

This "clever sister" went into primary teaching as well as the other three sisters. Among the four sisters, only one sensed a 'vocation'. Ana says that this was not the case for herself. She had no "vocation". But she adds:

> "As a teacher I had no vocation, but a vocation is something that we could acquire later. I had no special inclination for children. Those who have a clear vocation can make a contribution to teaching. Not in my case. I could have been a civil servant or something similar. I went into teaching because I had no other opportunities".

Isaura went into teaching for different reasons. She had thought about going to university. However, she already had a boyfriend and wanted to marry quickly, against the will of her

family. A university course would delay it further. The College would provide her with a certificate, the possibility of making a living and thus of marrying almost immediately after the completion of the course. She acted accordingly.

Luisa's 'choice' of primary teaching also was not vocational. She was admired within her family for her intellectual capacities. She was considered an "exceptional child" ('criança prodígio'). For instance, as a small child, she used to recite poems with great ease. Therefore her family started to think that she should have a different future from the other girls. She should go into teaching. However, Luisa stresses that she did not wish to teach. What she wanted most was to study, probably at a university, which would mean going to another town. Her parents would not agree to this:

> "There were no other job opportunities for girls. We could become seamstresses or dressmakers. However, within a specific social situation, there was nothing else to choose other than teaching".

Their life histories appear to demonstrate that primary teaching was really one of the few opportunities for young women to lead an autonomous life in the 'non-manual' world of work. The 'destiny' of a young woman to become a primary teacher, within the social groups mentioned above, was already traced, if specific social conditions could be met.

Three interesting issues concerning this topic can be stressed. Firstly, there is not a uniform view of women teachers' vocation for teaching small children. Nor do we find a united group of women claiming their special vocation for teaching or even for the teaching of small children Secondly, they have a sense of

themselves as continuing the work of women pioneers in teaching. Many of their friends did not work outside the household. They married, had children and a home, but no work outside. In contrast, these five women experienced an uncommon way of life (for their time). They could look around at their acquaintances and become aware of the singularity of their own lives. Thirdly, they recognised that the opportunities for work outside the household were scarce and that this lack of opportunities influenced their 'choice' of teaching.

. "our lives were similar to those of the gypsies":
the first years of teaching as the most difficult and precarious

As stressed earlier in this chapter, some of these teachers started their professional lives some years before the 28th May 1926, and others, during the Military Dictatorship (1926-33). Generally they were in their early twenties, or even younger, when they started teaching.

After her certification, Isaura sought a teaching post in Oporto (therefore, more than 150 km away from the family home) and told her mother, already a widow, that she wanted to teach to have some pocket money. Some months later, she married against the will of her family and went to Africa (Angola) in 1923, with her husband, a primary teacher as well.

"My marriage was disastrous",

she says to me. They got a post, immediately, in a Boer community and were paid in advance. They were paid three times the salary of teachers working in Portugal. They remained there from 1923 to 1925. Those were difficult times, particularly in terms of emotions and affections since her husband started to

behave strangely: he left her alone constantly, in the isolated place where they lived, was drunk several times, and irregular at work. He gained a bad reputation.

They returned to Portugal and the following years were conflictual and painful. She lived with him for some periods, and at others, they kept apart. The first girl was born in Africa and the second in 1926, back in Portugal. The first teaching post she got after the return from Africa was in Lisbon, in the same school as her husband. However, she fled from the school to the North of the country where her family lived, in search of some support and protection. The harassment continued but she was able to get a divorce in 1929.

Meanwhile, she applied for a teaching post as a relief teacher, and got it in the North East of the country in isolated and distant villages. These were places without any comfort, with precarious conditions during the winter, with cold weather and snow. She remembers that in one of these villages, she taught in the kitchen, with a great fire and the pupils sitting around, to resist the snow and cold outside. She also tells the episode with her and her daughter, during a cold night. She was in bed with her child and felt something dripping on them. The following day, she told her landlady who informed her that it must have been the rats which used to inhabit the attic of the house. She stresses that her life, and the lives of other teachers, in particular relief teachers, were very difficult. She used the following expression:

"(...) our lives were similar to those of the gypsies".

This meant that they were changing schools every year, sometimes twice a year. She had to carry with her the things that

she would not easily find in the villages to which she was sent. For instance, she always carried with her a palliasse to fill with straw in case the house lacked a mattress. She also had to move from one place to the next with, at least, one of the children, as will be seen below.

Things were not easy for Teresa either. She got her first post in October after finishing her course. Therefore in 1929 - at the age of nineteen - she started out as a teacher in a distant village, far from the family home. Her father came with her to arrange accomodation and to present her to family acquaintances. A domestic servant came to live with her, and after Christmas, her two cousins, who were well off and did not plan to work, came. Teresa missed her family very much and one day she even said to a friend of the family that she intended to leave the teaching post and return home. She was advised to change her mind and stayed on. She changed schools to other villages in the following three years until 1932, when she got a tenured post in a larger village. It was there that she married. Therefore, her difficulties were more of feeling lonely and missing her family. The support of her father, and several visits from her mother, helped to smooth the initial shock.

For Ana, the initial years after the end of College were difficult. She was not able to find a teaching post. She underlines that there were two main reasons for such difficulty: on the one hand, there were many unemployed teachers, and, on the other, she got a low mark in the final exam in the College. Only those with higher marks (such as Teresa, Laura and Isaura) were able to get a teaching post, soon after completing their course. Therefore, between 1919 and 1927, she did not teach. In 1927 she started

teaching, since her family provided a house for the school, which the State rented. The possibility of choosing the teacher, in exchange for providing a house for the school, was one that the State offered to those who locally intended to expand popular education (possibly strengthening patronage). She was able to remain in that village for more than 10 years. She married there and, some years later, exchanged her post with another colleague. Finally, she moved to the village where her husband lived.

The other two women found that their first years in teaching were precarious but not painful. Luisa easily got a post in the town of her parents as a relief teacher for two years (1919 to 1921). After that, when this teaching post ended, she remained at home, since her father did not allow her to move out of town to teach. She married in 1923 and went to live in Lisbon with her husband, an industrialist. She only returned to teaching in 1930, to teach her first child in the primary school.

Like Teresa, Laura easily found a teaching post in a village far from the family home. Similarly, her father helped her to get a place to live in the village where she was going to teach. Until her marriage, she always rented a room in a family house, where she was also able to get meals at a reasonable price. She has fond memories of the places she lived in during these first few years, especially of the relationships she established with local proprietors, who were well educated, and honoured her with esteem and affection.

The possibilities open to these women teachers were generally to start as relief teachers, usually in a distant village. The conditions of living were precarious and difficult. Their lives

resembled those of gypsies or travelling people, according to one of these women. And most of them had a sense of solitude. In one of the cases, this feeling was not experienced since the woman teacher was accepted and adopted by local proprietors. They also faced the prospect of unemployment and one of the possibilities at the time of getting a post was through someone (most probably a local proprietor) offering a house to the State to serve as school. In fact, the relationships of women teachers to local social groups could go through quite complex social relationships as will be seen below.

These first years of professional life were also those in which they started their married lives. Married life was articulated with their professional lives, but in one case, it had such an impact that it dictated the periods of teaching. In another case, the marriage was already breaking down painfully. I shall return to these points below.

. interweaving domestic and professional activities in the lives of primary teachers

For these teachers, their lives consisted of an attempt to reconcile their aspirations to an autonomous life (at least, in terms of making a living for themselves) through teaching, and the pressures to be good wives, mothers and respectable women.

As already stressed, some, more than others, experienced difficult conditions. As a single mother, since she was already divorced or on the point of being so, Isaura experienced more difficulties than Luisa, who could count on some support from her husband.

In their frequent stays in remote villages, separated from husbands, these women teachers usually had one or two of their children with them. To keep a child in the village could offer a respectable image. Isaura always had to take her children with her. She stresses that having a child with her, regarding the period when she was going through her divorce, and even after that, was vital for her respectability:

> "I always had my daughter with me. My mother insisted that I should have a child with me in the village. She was a kind of bodyguard".

In a similar way, Ana, already married, lived alone with her older child, in the village where she held her first post, for some years. Probably, to have a child as "a bodyguard" in the village was a successful strategy, since Isaura, Ana and Luisa, who lived in the villages alone with one of their children for several years, had no complaints of being treated with less consideration or of any unseemly attitude from the male inhabitants as far as they were aware. Teresa and Laura got tenured posts in the village where they started their married life and had children. Hence, they did not need to use this strategy to maintain respectability.

Another pressure put on them was how to reconcile the rhythms of their babies' feeding and the school timetable. Teresa clearly remembers the stress under which she breastfed her first child in order not to be late for school. Sometimes she would be in at nine, but on other days, she arrived there fifteen minutes later:

> "I used to breastfeed my first child at nine, thus he was able to wait three hours. At twelve o'clock, I returned to have lunch and again I breastfed him. The following was a common occurrence: when I was going to enter the school, under the school there was a shop, someone used invariably to ask: "what time is it?" The reply was always the same: "It is 9.10". "Ah! ten minutes after 9!". I was furious. But I had no alternative. On the following day, I had to do the same thing, I had to

> breastfeed my baby before the classes started. "what time is it?" "already 9.15?" My pupils' parents had great esteem for me, except those ones who owned this shop. And I was teaching their children!"

Teresa felt the pressure of the tradesman's family. Everytime she was late, she felt under pressure but could not help it, because her child had to be fed every three hours.

They also felt that, besides being good mothers, they needed to be the best teachers as well. Almost all of them (Isaura was the exception) taught their own children. In their opinion, they would not trust their children to anyone else, since they saw themselves as the most able to provide this service for them. When Teresa's older boy started primary school, she was forced to put him with another teacher, since she was teaching in a girls' school. However, he did not finish primary school with the level of knowledge she thought necessary. Therefore, she taught her second boy in the girls' school, against the law, and in danger of being reprimanded or punished.

For Luisa, the interweaving of domestic and professional activities is even more evident since, having left teaching after her early experience, she returned when her older child started elementary school. She stopped teaching when her last child completed primary school. She went back to teaching when she needed to finance her older son's completion of his university course, against her husband's will. After that, she stayed in teaching until retirement. Hence, most of her professional life revolved around the perceived educational needs of her children. At the same time, this reveals that she saw herself as best placed to teach her children and her return to teaching was justified for precisely that reason.

That their domestic and professional activities were deeply interwoven in their lives can also be seen in that the division of space, which usually separated those areas, was blurred. It was a common practice among some of these teachers to bring their children into the classroom. Luisa took her children to school; whilst she was teaching her older in her class, her younger child, aged two, sat at the other end of the classroom. Isaura, when she was still living in Lisbon with her husband, took her child with her when she was teaching. Later, when she was living in remote villages, she did the same:

> "My daughter was in the classroom. She did not interrupt. Even when I was in Lisbon, she was 1 or 2 years old, I took her with me to school. Sometimes, the inspector was in the corridor and came into the room. He wanted to know if she behaved. She did. All my children were raised in the schools where I taught. I never left them with anyone. When I was in the village, I paid a local girl to look after them in the classroom. She played with them or carried them in her arms. When the child wanted to sleep, there was a small mattress available. I did not want parents to say that the teacher ordered the pupils to look after her children. I never failed in my duties".

It was not so much the lack of local people willing to look after her children that explained the fact that she brought her children into school, when they were too young to attend primary school. Rather, her concern for her own children combined with the pressure she was under, as a single woman, to behave as a 'good mother', may offer an explanation for this concern to have the children constantly in her sight.

One of the most impressive features of the lives of women teachers, illustrated by these life histories, is the interweaving of their professional and domestic activities, in particular childcare. Probably, the collective representation of the

main activity of women as mothers made the teacher's responsibility for her children even greater, having to move with them from village to village. It is clear, from these accounts, that women teachers had two workplaces, like most women who worked outside the household. Marjorie Theobald (1990) stresses this point: "the lady schoolteacher journeyed between two workplaces, each of which, of necessity, impinged upon the other" (1990:20). However, at certain times of the day, domestic duties with their children conflicted with their teaching responsibilities as they attempted to juggle the professional definition of their activities and the pressures that their children put upon them in the same space. Probably, there were difficult moments and tensions in this attempt to handle two distinct and legally defined activities.

. daily school life and the inspector's visit

As women teachers involved in teaching, they conducted their daily school activities, mainly in rural settings, in isolation from the activitites of, and contact with other colleagues. Generally they were a few kilometers away from a colleague in the next village which did not facilitate communication. Although they started teaching whilst some teachers' organisations were still able to meet (albeit with restrictions and censorship already in place), they did not attend probably as a result of their distance from urban centres. The news about many of these meetings did not even reach their villages. There were almost no professional meetings organised by central government and the sense of isolation was great.

When they started teaching, the emphasis in schools was increasingly concentrated on the teacher's activitity in reading,

writing and arithmetic, that is in a kind of 'return to basics'. The syllabus was presented as more 'realistic' to what children needed to acquire to their future lives as rural workers (see chapter 6). In this context, the importance of the examination at the end of primary schooling for these teachers can be better understood. It represented the final outcome of several years of school attendance. All of them mentioned their anxieties about their pupils' success. As a result, they used to prepare their pupils systematically with mock exam papers. On exam day, they used to go with their pupils to the town or central village where the examination took place - sometimes this meant going long distances on horseback. Ana has vivid memories of when she used to do this and having to get up at four o'clock in the morning to be in town sometime before nine, when the examination would start. She and her pupils used to ride the ten kilometers on horseback. At nine in the morning, the children were already asleep. She remembers being tired by that hour, and wondering about her pupils and how they were doing in the exams! Teresa's husband used to drive her pupils to town to sit the exam. Given the fact that the children were often very poor, these teachers frequently paid both the costs of feeding them for the day and even the documents necessary to sit the exam.

These teachers hoped that their pupils would be able to obtain a 'distinction' in the examination - they would see it as stimulating pupils to whom the school culture was something quite distant. Undoubtedly, this also had implications for the teachers' evaluation. Teresa remembers some teachers who used to send gifts to the exam board, and a 'distinction' was usually granted. She was shocked by such processes. She stresses that this

happened in one of the municipalities but not where she taught later.

The visit of the inspector also represented an event in school life experienced with mixed feelings. It was feared for the specific controls it would put on teachers' work in the classroom, especially at a time of increasing political controls. At the same time, it was perceived as embodying the potential approval and legitimation of the work of the teacher. In remote villages, the visits were scarce or never took place, as in the villages where Ana taught. She never had a visit from the inspector. Isaura remembers these visits as ways of controlling the teacher's presence in the school or concerned with bureaucratic issues.

Teresa, surprisingly, has a more positive view of these visits. She also feared them not only when she was newly qualified and still quite inexperienced, but also later in her more mature years. She did not strictly follow the definition of a teacher's duties established by the 'Estado Novo'. The first visit she had from a school inspector was when she had been in her tenured post for some time. This inspector was feared because he was considered "rigorous" and could be "harmful":

> "I was near the desk and his figure appeared at the door of the room. I was very scared, so frightened that I was not able to speak. I felt embarassed, why was I so afraid? I think that it was because people used to say that he was so harmful, that he used to enter the schoolroom and to start almost immediately to criticise the work done by women teachers. Also, he used to give bad marks. I was in my fourth year of teaching. I think he noticed that I was embarassed. I remember very well as if it was today. He started to walk into the room, into the middle of pupils, slowly, and allowed me to calm down. Afterwards he looked at the black board where I had just written all the metric system, with the measures of height, volume (...) He looked at it and he liked it (...) I was more calm. He was very kind, he did not reprimand me. He sat at my desk, he was not bored, he felt good there, then he started to talk to me. He saw on the black board what he did not see in other schoolrooms, at least these were my suppositions (...). Before leaving, he said

> to me: "well, I like what you are doing, I think you are teaching well, therefore do not follow your colleagues in what they are doing, because they do not want to work and do not know how to teach".

The second visit of an inspector which Teresa wanted to tell me about happened some years later. It was a saturday and primary schools were supposed to dedicate some time to activities related to the nationalist youth organisation, 'Mocidade Portuguesa' and religion. The inspector first visited the boys' school, on the ground floor. Teresa could hear from her room, on the first floor, that the other teacher was starting prayers ('o terço'). Teresa never prayed with her pupils:

> "I was on the first floor and I never prayed with my pupils (girls). I was not going to pray this time just because the inspector was on the ground floor. The school was an old building and everything could be heard from one floor to the next.".

Teresa knew that there was a delicate balance to achieve. She started to talk to her pupils about solidarity. Afterwards she took the pupils out to the playground to play games and gymnastics, instead of the activitites of the youth organisation. The inspector came to observe. At the end of the games, he came to compliment her, giving his appraisal of her work, suggesting criticisms of the other teacher. Hence, she had a clear sense that inspectors had to be taken seriously and that they had a power which was threatening to a teacher's autonomy and political independence; but, at the same time, she felt that she needed to maintain her own integrity. She was lucky that she was confronted with inspectors who recognised her professional competence and probably understood her political position.

Although these women teachers taught under difficult and solitary conditions, their involvement in teaching did not suffer. Instead, there was a sense of professional pride which they built up and maintained, even when the social and professional conditions were neither stimulating nor encouraging.

Among them, some felt the political pressures of the authoritarian regime and sometimes found the opportunity and the strategies necessary to maintain their own integrity, for confronting problematical and complex conditions.

. development of professional life and retirement

Although the life histories of these women teachers could be continued, this thesis concentrates on the period of their lives which ends in 1933. For this reason, I will summarise some of the developments of their professional and personal lives since then, in order to gain a sense of their overall lives rather than just the small fraction presented above.

Generally, they were positive about their professional lives and defined themselves as involved in their teaching. With the exception of Luisa, whose professional life (at least, early on) was mainly constructed by the perceived school and academic needs of her children, all of them were teachers without interruption until they retired in the late 1960s or early 1970s. They got tenured posts around the 1930s, some younger than others. For instance, Teresa got a tenured post at an earlier stage in her life, when she was twenty two. Isaura, Ana and Laura were already in their thirties.

For some, to get tenure meant that they had to stay until retirement in the same school and place. Laura got her tenured

post, close to a town, where she stayed until her retirement. She taught there for more than thirty years and she still lives there. Ana spent the majority of her professional life (almost forty years) in two schools. She retired from the second one. She now lives, in her nineties, with one of her daughters in Oporto.

However, for others, this was not so. Teresa, Isaura and Luisa, after getting tenured posts, changed schools until they reached a town - generally considered a desirable step in the development of a professional career - where they taught for many years and from where they retired. Luisa and Teresa became headmistresses of their schools, which meant that at that time they were teaching in larger schools with more than one teacher.

In the school where she became headmistress, Teresa's involvement in the school, which included developing more creative forms of teaching and also her responsibility for the school's activities, must have been notorious because forty years later former pupils organised a party in her honour. Her competence and involvement as a teacher in the girls' school were praised in several speeches. She encouraged girls' attendance and achievement in the school, giving them access to a similar curriculum to the boys' which would be potentially useful to them in the 'workplace' and enable them to lead a more autonomous life. Her commitment, at a time when girls' education was seen as less important, is obvious from the accounts of former pupils and the episodes which Teresa recalls. I will return to these points below. She lives nowadays in a small village, in the house where her parents lived during the holidays, and after her father's retirement. She lives alone, far away from her sons and daughters who work in other towns. In the village, there is a suspicion that

the house is visited by wandering souls and that the former teacher is an 'odd' person. Teresa explains this by referring to herself as a non-catholic woman, a fact which is difficult to conjugate with local definitions of womanhood. Further, two non-religious funeral processions started from her house and this, also, was not well received by local inhabitants.

In her turn, Isaura, in the difficult conditions in which she lived as a single mother, and with a small salary, tried to find other ways of making a living for herself and her children. Coming to the town meant the prospect of earning more money from other activities besides teaching in the State primary school. In a small Northern town, she used to embroider and to crochet at piece-work rates to be sold by small firms from a well-known village nearby ('bordados da Lixa'):

> "Only when I came to a town, had I other possibilities. As a relief teacher I had a lot of economic difficulties. (...) But when I came to town, I was able to earn money with other jobs. I worked hard, in everything that appeared. I embroidered very often for 'bordados da Lixa'. I even finished lots of pairs of socks".

When she came to Oporto, she also taught in public schools and on adult education courses. She gave private lessons to different people, some of whom were not well received by her colleagues. Isaura did not identify with such views:

> "I needed the work, hence I was not in a position to find any work distasteful".

In the 1940s, she married for the second time with a primary teacher. She lives, nowadays, in Oporto where she retired, close to her family.

Involvement in teaching is stressed more by some of these teachers than by others. And this should be emphasised. Biklen (1990:33) describes the relationship of a woman teacher, called Mary Mudge, to her teaching as one requiring "satisfaction from [her] work",thus indicating that she did not "want to be [just] an average teacher". The same could be possibly applied to these women teachers.

All these women teachers led what is traditionally understood as 'womanly' lives: all of them married and had children. Later they became grandmothers, and even great-grandmothers. At various times, they found themselves without their partners, through widowhood or divorce. They were able to construct their lives as working women in articulation with their family lives. Prentice and Theobald (1991:15) stress that "family relationships and intimate friendships were probably more important in sustaining the majority of women than union activity". This is an important point concerning these women teachers. It was mainly through the articulation of family relations with teaching in diverse ways that they were able to construct meaningful lives. Today the importance of familiy relations and friendship endure when they are in their eighties or nineties.

VII - Women Teachers' Subjectivities

Life histories are especially important in bringing to light the views of the 'actresses' involved in this research. They clarify women teachers' involvement in schools and local communities as well as the meaning they attached to their work. We can also

discover their views on how they perceived their pupils both in rural and urban communities. Moreover, they also expressed their own views on the situation of women in this period of transition. It is to their subjectivities that I turn next.

. work as providing autonomy for a woman

> "I never had any intention of leaving the school and to stop teaching. Nor do I advise anyone to stop working. It maintains our autonomy. I have felt this all my life. To live from our work is something that makes us independent beings. It gives us a certain sense of freedom and happiness. (...) I do not agree that women should be under the rule of their husbands. I do not accept impositions from anyone. Many women had no other solution than to be submssive to a husband for economic reasons".

Although this consciousness of the need for autonomy was probably not experienced in quite the same way by each of the five women teachers, Isaura is the one who expresses this with the most vigour. She speaks from the position of a woman who has been through divorce and who had to support herself as a single mother. Whilst she was rearing her children and working in the village school, she clearly got the sense that men held power over women, in general resembling the relations of "master to servant".

Moreover, she also had to confront uncomfortable feelings from other people, who pitied a woman who worked outside the household, as if this were a dishonour or a misfortune or even a breach of her duties as a mother[6]. She recognises that the Republic

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[6] Ana Osório (mentioned often in other chapters, mainly in chapter 8) stressed that she was educated in a family where a woman who worked outside the household was considered "excessive": "she would be dishonoured from the moral point of view". She always felt revolted when she was told that her brothers would take care of her. "The deepest anger would arise in me and I would protest. I was firmly convinced that I would never live off the work of others, because this for me would be an intolerable indignity" (Osório 1911a:105).

had implications for women's lives, in particular concerning divorce.

These feelings were strengthened when these women teachers compared their lives with their acquaintances either from childhood or adulthood. They got the feeling that they were quite unique, within their social groups, as women working outside the household. This is expressed by Teresa, in particular. Her friends from childhood did not work in their adult lives. They married, had children and stayed at home managing and working the domestic routine. Most of the women friends she met in adulthood were also married women not working outside the home. The only exceptions among her close relations were her teaching colleagues.

The autonomy of these women may also be perceived by the attitudes they adopted throughout their lives, or at specific turning points. Sometimes, they were the strongest partners within their marriages in terms of responsibility, and with regard to decisions that had to be taken. Isaura, Ana and Laura exemplify the case of single mothers, or of women living almost as if they were, at least for lengthy periods. Luisa was probably the one who followed the most traditional pattern in managing family life, as she left and re-entered teaching twice due to the needs of her children. There was a turning point when, in the middle of a family crisis, she made a solitary decision. She decided to finance the continuation of her eldest son's university course, against her husband's will - which meant she had to return to teaching. After this incident, she did not leave teaching again until her retirement. In her turn, Teresa appears as a member of her family holding distinct political beliefs with regard to the regime and who supported her brother, imprisoned by the political police. Her life

conveys the impression that her influence in family life was central and decisive.

Thus, teaching for these women was a means of autonomy and, at the same time, an activity to which some, more than others, devoted considerable energy and emotional investment. In return, they found joy and gratification in their teaching on many occasions.

None of these five women teachers appears to identify with the traditional 'middle class' (or even 'lower-middle class') situation of women in Portuguese society. In fact they worked outside their homes. Their lives (at least the majority of them) apparently conformed to the ordinary conventions of social life. At the same time, their professional pathways were of active involvement, based on an understanding of the specific circumstances they were able to take advantage of in their workplaces in spite of the social and political context in which they were located. Through the use of the 'kaleidoscope' effect, proposed by Stanley (1992), I gain a sense that most of their lives were conducted, even when they were married, as if they should count mainly on their own strengths and intellectual views.

. surviving on the miserable teachers' salary

To different degrees, they saw their salaries as teachers as very low, and even 'miserable'. This was more clearly felt by those who were the principal wage earners in their families, such as Isaura and Ana. Ana's husband died when she was almost forty, and she remained single for the rest of her life. Even Laura experienced some difficulties, although her husband was working

in Africa, in one of the then Spanish colonies, as an administrator of a coffee company. She was left alone with the two children several times, while her husband was abroad. This meant that she had to economise. Isaura, as a single mother, and an independent woman, did not want to ask for financial assistance from her mother or other members of her family. She struggled to support her children as best she could on her meagre resources. She also stresses that teachers' salaries were so low that

> "they suffered many hardships. What we earned was not enough to cover individual needs, never mind those of a family. We did not have social security, we had nothing".

She still remembers vividly João Franco's policies (mentioned in chapter 2) towards primary teachers, at the end of the Monarchy, which stressed that teachers could survive with very small salaries because they should be able to supplement their income by cultivating potatoes or cabbage in their backyards. Isaura remembers what her colleague used to say:

> "My happiest days are between the 20th and the 30th of the month, because during this time everybody knows that I have no money and therefore no one asks me to pay my debts".

Life was probably less difficult financially for Luisa and Teresa, because they could rely on support from their husbands (an industrialist and a tradesman respectively). Generally, their husbands were able to provide their households with some comfort. This was not always possible for Teresa's husband. The fact that Luisa and Teresa could afford to send their children (two and four children, respectively, both sons and daughters) to university was evidence of their improved economic conditions. However, this meant very strict budgeting since, as Teresa stresses, the

teacher's salary was very low, and it was quite difficult financially to support the whole family at certain times of the year.

Their recollection of being badly paid does not distinguish between the Republic and the following years. Three of them did not start teaching until after the 28th May 1926. The other two, who started before, did so for only a short period. Possible salary increases which were introduced in the 1920s (during the republican era) could not have made much impact as they failed to mention them. Also they could not be involved in groups which campaigned for better salaries for, indeed, any association or trades union of civil servants or strikes of employees were forbidden by the authoritarian State.

"The State was not going to pay more".

This was the kind of consciousness that they had of their situation as paid employees of the State. The strategy was to attempt to combine the work in the State sector with other activities which could provide a financial supplement to keep the family together. Economic difficulties were felt clearly and there were not many alternatives. Isaura underlines that:

> "I chose teaching, I did not go into it because someone forced it on me. Hence, I had to endure it. I had a family, I made compromises, I married and had children, I had my duties towards my children, therefore I had to abide by it".

Teachers, including women, could always remember the words of the nineteenth-century Prime Minister João Franco that they should actively seek other sources of income apart from teaching. This was the message that the educational policies

conveyed to teachers continuously, albeit sometimes with an innovative rhetoric. The potential of teachers' work in the development of Portuguese society was insufficiently recognised by the political powers .

. the relationship between the woman teacher and the rural community

An important theme in all the life histories of the five women teachers is the relationship that existed between them, as teachers, and the village, where they were located. It is worth remembering at this point, that all five started their professional lives in small rural communitites. Probably, for that reason, this is something which all of them mentioned quite spontaneously.

Quite often, small villages are featured as "backward" and "primitive" places in which the woman teacher felt a sense of isolation. This feeling is explained mainly by the fact that they did not find people in the village who shared the same views and concerns. It is peasants' illiteracy which is underlined many times as well as the lack of activities and life-styles consistent with their own 'cultural capital'.

At the same time, some of these women teachers did know features of peasant culture, and similar to ethnographers of local life, attempted to describe it. Isaura, for instance, describes ways and materials used for dressing and housing (such as coarse cotton cloth, tow, wool and straw), which were produced locally by the mountaineers in the village where she taught. The first time she went to church she saw the special clothes and garments, she was surprised. Hence, although she thought life in the village was "primitive", she was also curious and felt the strangeness of a

cultural gap which she attempted to fill with knowledge about the life of peasants in the mountains.

In considering the relationship with the community in terms of the State republican discourse on the teachers' role in remote villages, generally these women teachers did not see their role as stimulating the development of the local community by participating in the public life of the village. Republican politicians envisaged the teacher's role as transforming peasants' minds into republican minds, through holding public meetings, especially political ones, "to fight vice and prejudice in the community".

In common with them, these women teachers understood the role of the school as a "civilizing" mission, through the 'pedagogic work' carried out inside the classroom (in many areas, including hygiene and nourishment) as the basis for changes in the rural environment. Like the republicans, they believed that it was possible to contribute to changing peasant communities from inside the schools. However, they did not occupy the public space that the republican discourse envisaged for the role of the teacher. Even Teresa, who was probably, in terms of her education and her father's heritage, closer to republican and mainly 'New Education' ideals, remained within the confines of the space of the school. She was not the public leader of the community, a role occupied by the local priest, although as a non-believer she felt a sense of opposition to him.

Presumably, there was a gender division between the woman teacher - radically different from that of the male teacher - and the peasant community, concerning what was expected from her and how she should behave.

The woman teacher's relationship with the community is also mentioned as embodying the recognition of the importance of the service she provided. In many of these places, those who knew how to read and write could be counted on the fingers of one hand. The teacher was praised for the uniqueness of his/her knowledge and the power to confer a diploma necessary for the world of work. There are many stories which women teachers tell concerning the recognition by former pupils of their teachers for enabling them to complete their primary schooling, due to their commitment as teachers.

The teacher's work in the community was also understood as an answer to specific requests made in a context where 'cultural capital' was scarce. The insistent requests by the village inhabitants for help from the teacher to write a document or to read a letter were willingly met:

> "They depended on me for everything during that year... if they needed a certificate it was written by me and then signed by the local government officer. Whatever they needed to be written, I was always asked to do it."

And peasants would demonstrate their gratitude to the teacher, with their gifts which they often brought (bread, wood, pork). Therefore, women teachers, like their male counterparts, were able to enjoy the respect, prestige and legitimacy that the village community granted to them. Apparently, these women teachers did not see this relationship as gendered, i.e., as a relationship in which gender mattered. The impression transmitted by them is as if the relationship between the community and the teacher were gender-neutral, as if it were the same to have a man or a woman sitting in the school chair.

Peasants' lives were perceived as organised around subsistence, supported by agriculture and cattle grazing, but the relevant symbolic rituals appear to have been ignored. The festivities mentioned in their accounts, such as the 'slaughter of the pig' ('matança do porco'), an important gathering and a major celebration for peasants in the village, did not count with the presence of these teachers. They stressed the need they felt to distance themselves from local life. Isaura, for instance, states that:

> "I never went to the 'slaughter of the pig'. We must maintain a certain position, I had to keep myself in my rightful place. When people become so used to one another, they have difficulty in maintaining respect. In the villages where I taught there were no popular parties. They were much too primitive. In later years, I always had too much to do to be able to attend."

Ana, in her turn, also declared that she did not participate in the local festivities. She had no pleasure in being there. She adds:

> "I did not participate in these festivities. However, I had very good relations with the peasants. They came to talk to me, and I used to talk to them. In order to establish good relations, it is necessary to keep a certain distance. Although everybody in the villages around knew me, I could not know all of them, there were so many. When I met them on the roads, they recognised me. In those times, people treated a woman teacher with great respect".

From these statements, there is a concern not to mix the activitites of the school, which are highly praised by the teacher, with those of the community, sometimes seen as 'uncultivated', and 'primitive'. To distance oneself is a form of underlining the uniqueness that one attributes to the culture of the school.

These women teachers started teaching when the official republican discourse began to fade way. Meanwhile, the exclusive emphasis on reading, writing and counting, as the basic activity of primary schools, was growing. The political context was changing and the role of the teacher began to be prescribed differently. Nevertheless, some of the former republican ideas about learning, schooling and pupils remained in the legacy these teachers received. Teresa, again, represents probably one of the best examples of innovative involvement in teaching, as will be seen below.

The relationship of these women teachers to the rural community was not marked by open conflict. There was even a clear demonstration of the gratitude of peasants to their presence and practice in the village. Nevertheless, the issue of the relationship of the woman teacher to the rural community can be pursued in other directions. Although women teachers felt that they received the same treatment as men, a gender issue was present in this relationship. Some of these women teachers stated the need for keeping their distance from the peasant community, in order to be heard with more attention. This can be interpreted as a strategy to deal with a situation in which their status as women was fragile. Prentice and Theobald (1991) remind us that "most elementary women teachers were not accepted by their communities as genuine professionals" (1991:13). To have acquired knowledge through qualifications and training in State institutions as a woman was quite a recent innovation within the peasant community, too recent to gain a legitimacy by itself. And the woman teacher stressed the importance of the culture of the school - almost taking refuge within it - and underlined her

distance from the community. These aspects may reveal some tension and uncertainty in this relationship, which can be understood in terms of both gender and class relations.

. the woman teacher, the pupils and the school

Hearing the accounts of these women teachers, I increasingly sensed the difficult conditions in which they had worked. Besides the constant feeling of isolation, they were often confronted with the poor and precarious conditions of buildings and school materials. The lack of regular attendance from pupils was a further pressure upon them, which they addressed in different ways.

As far as the conditions of buildings were concerned, Teresa, for instance, remembers that:

> "In one of my first years of teaching, I had to work with different classes in a small room which was adapted for the purpose. Some children had to sit on the floor. In the following year, in another school, there was again a room, in a building which was falling into ruins. Under the school room, there was a mare in a stable. The owner used to say that the mare already knew how to count!"

These were the material conditions. Thus, the pupils experienced some continuity between school and the rough conditions of their rural lives. All these teachers mentioned the difficulties they had with absentee pupils - although compulsory schooling was already legally in effect - and the tactics they adopted to attract and keep them in the classroom.

Isaura argued with the inspector who came to visit her about the school timetable which she had organised according to the needs of her pupils' work:

> "During the winter, children wanted school to be in the morning since the snow was still on the grass and the cattle could not reach it. During the hot summer, they asked for the classes to be held in the afternoon, because the fresh mornings were more tolerable for working in the fields".

She explained this to the school inspector who insisted that this was not the official timetable and that she needed special authorisation from the Minister for 'Instruction'. However she chose not to write for, for her, the only possible solution was to comply with the working demands of the local community, otherwise her pupils would not come.

Ana was also confronted with pupils, who, because of their poor condtions, did not attend school regularly. Sometimes she noticed that they hid when they saw her going to school across the fields. They used to work in the fields with older brothers or sisters, some were only four years old. She pitied their situation and, at the same time, she used to talk to their parents, insisting that they should send their children to school. She discloses that she did not mark their absences in the school book:

> "They were so frequently absent from school that I could not mark them in the school book, because, God help us, there would be more absences than presences. It was so difficult for us as teachers to bear such a situation...!"

However, in other villages, the situation was not exactly the same. She compares the two villages where she taught and in one of them, she could see how the villagers were interested in school matters, in attending school and in getting their certificates. Somehow she thinks that this could be related to the different conditions in this village due to the existence of the railway station and the fact that many people were coming to and going from the village every day. In addition, during holidays people

used to come in great numbers. The confrontation of the villagers with the ideas and attitudes of people from outside was seen as important to stimulate them to attend school.

Teresa was also confronted with pupils who did not attend school regularly. In one of the first villages where she taught, no one had yet obtained the primary school certificate. She had to develop specific strategies to deal with the problem:

> "I had to adopt the right attitudes in order to obtain their school attendance. I was living in the village, and for that reason, I could establish good relationships with the families of my pupils and contribute to their understanding of the benefits of 'instruction'. It was necessary to attract them to the school, and make the school ambiance enjoyable. Sometimes, they came to me crying since their mothers would not allow them to go to school. I organised a 'school excursion' ('passeio escolar'). Nobody knew what this was. Some people were touched when I appeared with so many children around me. On the 1st December (bank holiday celebrating Portugal's recovery of independence from Spain), I organised the first school party with the pupils. They sang. They made drawings to decorate the room. They also displayed their school-written compositions. They recited poetry. In the end, we went out to plant a tree and we had an afternoon snack".

Therefore, she established a relationship with peasant families on the basis of the importance of schooling, sometimes arguing with them that Pedro or Micas should be allowed to go to school. Several times she was confronted with the resistance of peasants to schooling in such ways as this: "Pedro already knows how to read. He knows more than me. I do not know any of these things, and I do not suffer from the lack of it". Regarding girls, this resistance was even greater. They were more often absent from school. Teresa also argued with the girls' parents. In one of these cases, the father, at the end of the conversation, finally accepted that Micas would return to school, with these words: "she will go to school as a kindness to you" ('para fazer o favor à senhora'). Teresa pursued this kind of contact with the community, whilst

she extended school activities to include parties, excursions, singing and theatre, along the lines of the 'New Education', to stimulate the peasant children's interest in 'instruction' and education. She describes her activity in the village where she worked for several years:

> "During these years of teaching, many people were able to finish their primary schooling. I instilled in my pupils a love of intellectual culture. Many were able to later get a certificate of further education and even a university degree. Many of them, as parents, stimulated their children to graduate. Nowadays, this village is the one (within this municipality) with more people with a university degree".

Further, there were other kinds of involvement to which the woman teacher responded. Teresa, for instance, more than once, took care of girls, who were poor and almost rejected, not only in their social milieux, but also in school. Other teachers in the school predicted that one such girl was unable to complete primary school. Teresa started to stimulate her in the activities of the class, asking her help to take responsibility in the organisation of class activitites. During the holidays, she invited her to her home

> "I taught her hygiene and other skills. When she returned to school the following October, she looked completely different. She finished primary school successfully".

In her turn, Laura took in an Austrian girl (aged 7), for several months, in the immediate aftermath of World War II. Laura did not know how to speak German and the girl did not know any other language. Laura took her to the primary school to integrate her with the village children. The relationship between Laura and Sofia lasted long after the girl returned to Vienna. Further, her house and school were constantly filled with girls from her family

and acquaintances, who expected her support and teaching to enable them to complete primary school. They would come to live with her from other villages or even towns, during the year of the final examination and she used to work hard with them. Likewise, she used to take home the pupils of the village who needed special preparation for this examination. Her commitment to the pupils emphasised their need to succeed in the final examination.

When perspectives on pupils from rural and urban backgrounds are compared, opinions diverge. Almost all of these teachers experienced both settings and, in general, teaching in town was considered as a desired step forward in their teaching career. However, this did not mean that urban pupils were considered less difficult to teach. Whilst Ana thinks that peasant children were remote from the culture of the school, which represented a difficult task for the teacher, Isaura underlines the arduous character of teaching in town, particularly in poor urban districts:

> "These places represent hunger, plague and war! (...)These people primarily need education. They needed education even more than 'instruction' and I took every opportunity to guide them in the right direction."

Isaura's feeling of strangeness towards the poor urban districts - but, at the same time, with an acute sense of the strong social conflicts exploding there - is translated in moral terms, revealing the pressure which she was under from her former education, training and social up-bringing. Probably the training in republican Teacher Colleges was not directed towards the work of teachers in poor urban districts. Similarly, the lack of any reflexive continuous teacher education during the 'Estado Novo'

could not help these teachers in their contact with poor urban populations.

Many of the school activities of these women teachers, in old and inappropriate buildings, were guided by a sense of the equal opportunities that peasant and poor children should have in access to schooling. At the same time, they were confronted with peasant children's working in the fields and, consequently, with their absence from school. They tried to persuade peasant parents to send their children to school more regularly. Sometimes they were successful.

. attitudes towards the political regime

Different ways of understanding politics and the relationship of the teacher towards the regime are revealed by the five women teachers. As has been stressed, two of these women started to teach before the 28th May 1926, the others after that.

It is quite clear from all their narratives that the events of 28th May 1926 were not experienced as bringing immediate change into schools. It was perceived as another military coup in the complex and conflictual relationship between the politicians and the military, with workers' struggles for social and political justice in its background. Hence, at that time, the military coup did not assume the significance that it later acquired as a political break and rupture, creating the conditions for the introduction of more conservative educational policies and practices. Life in schools was not immediately transformed.

Teresa started to attend Teacher College in that year. She was sixteen then and hardly interested in political questions. She cannot remember anything abnormal happening. People neither

talked about the recent political events, nor felt the grip of censorship immediately. There was only a small incident in a class with a lecturer. After an answer she gave regarding a topic in the programme, he took advantage of it to subtly contest the growing influence of catholicism in teachers' education.

Luisa was not teaching at the time of the military coup. Isaura had returned from Africa some time before the military coup took place but was too involved in the personal conflicts of her marriage to carefully examine its possible implications in schools. Ana and Laura were living in remote villages and this event did not represent a matter of great concern to them to be kept in memory for long.

Some of these women, more than the others, became conscious of the changes that, some time later, were introduced in schools, year after year.

After her first return to teaching, in 1930-31, Luisa remembers best what happened to her in the year of 1934. She was ordered to "organise the elections" ("fazer as eleições") in the village (near Tomar), which meant that she had to call the population, tell them what the elections were for and spread propaganda for the regime. In 1934, the first elections of the 'Estado Novo' were held:

> "I was ordered to "organise the elections", that is I had to call the population and explain what was going to happen, I had to promote the propaganda of the regime. I decided to call the population for a thursday because I knew that nobody would come. I later told the school inspector that nobody came except a man who suffered from incontinency and could not stay long. In the middle of the year 'they' closed my school and I was sent to Lamarosa, Coruche, which was in the middle of nowhere. I asked the school inspector why they closed the school. He told me that there were not enough children. But I had 35/40 pupils. I think that they closed the school to punish me for not doing what I was told".

She saw this compulsory measure as a punishment for her political attitude. When she returned to teaching for the second time, in 1942, many practices and teaching content had changed:

> "When I returned to teaching in 1942, the Catholic prayers (suspended since the onset of the Republic) were again introduced. I did not agree with this. Thus, as there were other teachers in the school, when it was time for prayers, I would open the door of my classroom and let my pupils pray with the other class. With regard to the reading texts, I never selected those that included propaganda for Salazar and the political regime. I used to tell the pupils: we will read them later. However, I never returned to them".

Her distance from the political regime was also marked by her always declining to send telegrams or signing any letters of support for the regime. Luisa stresses that she always maintained a "great distance" from the conservative regime. When I met her three years ago, she was almost ninety and supposedly a sympathiser of the Communist Party.

Teresa, in her turn, after her first years in teaching and the experience of her brother being imprisoned by the political police, developed her own perspective on the regime. She underlines that she did not have political consciousness during her first years of teaching:

> "In the first years, what I wanted was to teach, I wanted to attract children, I was very much concerned with the children and I was feeling very well in their midst. I did not read the newspapers, at the time".

Her political awareness with regard to the regime was undergoing development. Teresa remembers, after having taught for some time, the introduction of propaganda and religious texts in schoolbooks, as well as the 'nationalist' emphasis. She is aware that she did not conform with the political views established, at least in some areas. Like Luisa, she did not devote attention to the

propaganda texts for the regime included in the reading books. Also, she never prayed in class. When she had to teach about the Portuguese possessions, she even criticised the colonial policies of the regime.

> "They knew my ideas. Because of this, I was passed over in several situations. For instance, when there was a place in the training school ('escola anexa'), I applied and was told by the inspector that I stood a chance of being selected. Someone else got the place, not me. She did not have the necessary qualifications".

In other situations, such as juries for examinations, she was also not selected. She can remember quite well the general fear of the political police and the persecutions that many persons suffered. When people from the left met in a public place, on a train, for instance, it was necessary to speak softly or even to whistle, for fear that the conversation should be overheard by the members of the political police.

It seems that for Laura and Ana, the issue of the relationship between the teacher and the political regime was not problematic. They were much too involved in their own concerns in increasing their pupils' ability to read, write and count and in being able to complete primary school, as well as in their homes and the education of their children. They did not find either the time or the means to reflect on this question. Isaura was probably somewhere in the middle of both positionings. She probably paid 'lip service' - a concept which Philip Corrigan and Paul Willis (1980) analyse - meaning that she did not avoid the propaganda texts for the regime, although she did not agree with them. She maintained some distance from the events or celebrations of the regime. For instance, she did not attend the demonstrations which

the regime organised or send petitions and telegrams in support of it. Nevertheless, she always had to bear in mind that she needed her post in the primary school for the economic survival of herself and her family.

From the subjective perspectives of the five women teachers, we do not find a homogeneity regarding their political positioning towards the regime post 28th May 1926. Instead, there were diverse political implications. As civil servants of an authoritarian State and women, there were many acts where conformity was unquestionable by the fact of being employees and wishing to keep their job. However, it emerges from some of their accounts that 'lip service' and more explicit acts of political distance and disagreement were taken when opportunities arose.

VIII - Conclusion

Life histories of women teachers who started their professional lives in the final period of the Republic or in the years of the Military Dictatorship (which gave away to the 'Estado Novo') elucidate the pathways they followed and the contexts in which they lived and worked. Among other reasons, the tendency of historians of education to write teachers' history as if it were gender neutral has resulted in the fact that hidden aspects and specificity of women teachers' lives have remained unknown.

The analysis of their life histories uncovers the 'private nature' of their work. In consequence, I gain a sense of how much their life revolved around two 'workplaces', both in the household, where the responsibility for the domestic sphere largely fell on

them, and in the school. There were similaritites between the work concretised in both places. In fact, the woman teacher arrived at her second place of work to recommence her traditional relationship with children, as Theobald (1990) underlines. At other times, her duties in the household were extended to the school, in terms of educating her own children as pupils or keeping them, almost from birth, in the classroom.

Their life histories also bring out their subjectivities. The search for the *subjectivity* of life histories was contextualised by the theoretical concerns of authors such as Stanley and Ferrarotti. The life histories have revealed the previously unheard voices and perspectives of women teachers on their lives and the life of schools and communities.

We have heard what these women say about their *experience* in the rural communities and the way this relationship was filtered through gender roles. All of them felt that there was a delicate balance to be maintained: they felt their isolation in the rural community, while they were under the pressure of maintaining their 'respectability' as women living without men (their husbands lived in other places or they were divorced or widows). These pressures resulted in their distancing themselves from villagers, in the sense that they did not participate in peasants' daily activities or festivities, although responding positively to peasant demands for their literacy services (such as filling in forms).

We also heard about women teachers' strategies in dealing with pupils who had to work in the fields rather than attending school. This was often a difficult task. On the one hand, they could understand that peasant family economies were dependent on

children's labour in the fields. On the other hand, they believed in the importance of 'instruction' and education and the need to persuade peasant families of their relevance. The appeals they made to peasant families for them not to take their children away from school were sometimes understood differently. Here the answer of a peasant saying that his child would return to the school only as a favour to her teacher springs to mind. Therefore, these women teachers felt that there was a delicate balance to be maintained between the relevance that, as teachers, they attributed to schooling and 'instruction' for children's future lives and the perceived needs of the peasant community.

Their involvement in the success of their pupils has been revealed. A school ritual such as the primary school final exam concentrated many of their energies and was invested as one of the most important goals to be attained by schooling. Successful exams and even 'distinctions' were considered as relevant in their professional activity. The importance that exams acquired in those days can be related to a process of schooling which emphasised a kind of 'return to basics' and to processes which were undermining the professional competencies of teachers during the authoritarian regime. Besides that, there was among them a strong commitment to teaching and to public schooling.

Their relationship to the political regime that some, more than others, distanced themselves from, within a context of suspicion and fear, has also been addressed. The most critical of the regime were aware of the constant political pressures which they had to confront in order to maintain their moral integrity while it was crucial for them (for four of them anyway) to maintain their teaching posts since they had no other job

alternatives. Therefore, they often had to find strategies which allowed them to escape from what were defined as their duties as teachers within an authoritarian regime (such as catholic prayers, the appraisal of the colonial policies of the regime or of its leaders, or even the support to be giver to the great public marches or commemorations of 'salazarism') without being expelled from teaching (or worse).

Generally these women valued their autonomy and independence as working women (outside the 'householdplace'), attaching to teaching a central meaning in their lives. Hence, there is scope to speak about the "hidden struggles" they maintained, in specific periods of their lives, regarding the political context and the patriarchal relationships in which they were involved as women.

With regard to the way they struggled to maintain some meaning in their 'private' lives, some more than others had to confront many moments of solitary decision-making independently of their husbands. They also felt that their work provided them with the means of maintaining their own independence (at least, in matters they considered important). Finally their work also provided them with some means of influencing the communities where they taught.

Due to the openness, accessibility and friendship of these women teachers, I became acquainted with their *experience*, that is with their ways of making sense of their own realities, their ways of knowing subjectively, and with their professional pathways. Our knowledge of the history of mass schooling in Portugal has been enrichened, and possibly transformed, by this new knowledge. From now on, it should be clear that views of the

construction of mass schooling in Portugal need to take into consideration the active involvement of women teachers, as well as the critical awareness that specific fractions of them have had of the complexity of the processes of the 'public' and 'private' domains with relation to their lives, both as women and as professionals.

At the same time, these accounts contribute to the construction of Women's History, giving us a sense of the active involvement of women searching to construct meaningful lives in a variety of ways. Undoubtedly class and gender contradictions were enmeshed in their lives but this is only a part of their histories. In terms once again of Liz Stanley's (1992) 'kaleidoscope' effect, we can look at their lives and see how they contributed to the construction of mass schooling in Portugal and how they were able to live their lives under great pressure while negotiating patriarchy, politics, religion and local community perspectives on education with a level of commitment which was impressive indeed.

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This thesis presents a historical and sociological analysis of the construction of primary teaching as *women's work* in Portugal. The research starts with the decade of the 1870s since important educational policies were elaborated at this time with regard to the expansion of mass schooling and to women's entry to primary schooling. Two main periods are identified, 1870-1910 and 1910-1933, framed by major political events and developments in the country - the onset of the First Portuguese Republic in 1910 and the launching of the main institutions of the authoritarian State, the 'Estado Novo', in 1933.

The thesis privileges, firstly, a structural approach focusing on the educational policies on mass schooling and women's entry into primary teaching and the ideologies related to their 'role'. Secondly, this construction is interpreted in terms of 'agency', i.e. giving emphasis to women's views and pathways on their own terms.

Within the framework of Sociology of Education, the thesis has drawn on Political Sociology, with regard to theories of the State. Moreover, the contribution of Women's History has proved vital in understanding women teachers' situation, pathways and subjectivities. Hence, this research attempts to bring together a complex articulation of theoretical concerns of 'feminisation', mass schooling, State theory and political perspectives to specific historical periods in Portugal. This analysis challenges patriarchal interpretations on women's activities and contributes to women's

visibility in Social Sciences and Education, through reinterpreting the history of mass schooling in Portugal, with regard to the periods mentioned above.

Here a review of the main conclusions of this thesis is presented with regard to the construction of primary teaching in Portugal as *women's work*, during the years 1870-1933. Finally, I will offer some suggestions for further research in this domain.

State educational policies sponsoring women's entry into teaching (1870-1910)

With reference to the first period, 1870-1910, the analysis revealed that the State produced policies which attracted women into teaching in growing numbers and contributed to the 'feminisation' of teaching. This process was found to be closely related to the development of mass schooling in Portugal.

In fact, primary teaching was the first level of formal education open to women's participation. It was not until the second half of the nineteenth-century that the girls' school network began to grow more rapidly. After the 1870s, teaching started to attract more women and to be perceived as a potential area of *women's work*. Between the 1870s and 1890s, the proportion of women in the profession rose from one fifth to one third of the total. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth-century, women constituted the majority of State primary teachers.

The 'core problems' theory with regard to the capitalist State by Dale (1989) and Dale & Ozga (1991) offered a useful approach to State activity. In this approach, the State is seen as a non-neutral arbiter in the process of accumulation and, at the same

time, as non-instrumental to the ruling groups involved in this process. Deep contradictions characterise its activity caused by the conflictual nature of the political, economic and ideological problems confronting it. Furthermore, not all the activities of the State are accountable to the process of accumulation, which creates possibilities for understanding events and changes in patriarchal relations. This thesis recognises that patriarchal relations are not functionally articulated to capitalist relations: the transition of women from "private forms of patriarchy" to "public forms of patriarchy" (Walby 1990), in the case of women teachers' increasing entry to mass schooling, put additional pressures upon the State.

In the light of this theoretical framework the thesis has shown that, with regard to women's entry to mass schooling, the State was under different and conflicting pressures. Women as primary teachers could be less expensive. In spite of equal pay, introduced with the *1878 Educational Reform Act*, there was a general assumption that women would be a more compliant workforce, and that they would not struggle for increases in their salaries. However, their increasing entry into mass schooling provoked opposition.

In fact, there was resistance to women working in primary schooling and, in general, to (middle class) women's entry to the 'workplace'. For certain sectors of the 'positivists', women were perceived as not embodying the qualities of 'true' workers due to their 'weak' physical and psychological nature. They were considered so frail as to be almost incapacitated, requiring protection and to be kept within the household. They were unfit for careers and independence in the public sphere. Moreover, the

perspective on women as defined by their duties in the household was not easily articulated with another in which they were seen as salaried workers in the State sector.

Although there was resistance to women's entry into the 'public sphere', and in particular into primary teaching, this thesis has demonstrated that the supporters for their entry - even from specific sectors of the 'positivists' - were visible and influential at the level of policy-making. The most notorious apologist of women as primary teachers was António da Costa, who was Minister of 'Instruction' for only three months in 1870, but was nonetheless able to influence most of the educational documents produced on mass schooling during the 1870s and the 1880s. For instance, the debates and documents presented in Parliament to pass an Education Act - repeated several times - were clearly influenced by Costa's assumptions on women's best and inherent qualities for teaching children, i.e the production of what David (1980) has called *maternalism*. Costa's writings (Costa 1870) and the *1870 Education Reform Act*, produced during his short government, clearly influenced the *1878 Education Reform Act*, which constituted a landmark in education policy-making during this period.

In this Education Act, firstly, equal pay for women primary teachers was introduced for the first time demonstrating that, in comparison with other countries, the Portuguese State was advanced ('precocious') in this matter. Secondly, the job definition of women primary teachers was redefined and expanded in the State sector: from suitable for girls only, in 1815, to being competent to teach mixed and even boys' classes up to the age of 12, from 1878 onwards. Conversely, men teachers were not

allowed to teach in girls' schools, and to teach mixed classes they needed the assistance of either a wife or a female relation who could be in charge of girls' moral education and needlework. Thus, within the context of nineteenth-century rhetoric about women's role in the regeneration of the family and their moral power and 'purity', only women were perceived as able to integrate both sexes in school without fear of corrupting children's minds and bodies. Thirdly, the *1878 Education Act* also reorganised teacher education, creating an equal number of Teacher Colleges for women, in clear contrast to the majority of men in the occupation at the time (4/5ths of the total number).

However, the analysis has also demonstrated that many tensions existed at the level of teacher education with regard to what was to be taught to both sexes. The subjects that women students were taught reveal that traditional views on what counted as women's education and proper role models were hardly challenged: academic subjects, such as arithmetic, geometry, geography, natural history, pedagogics, methodology, among others, took less time on women students' timetables. In contrast, they had heavy timetables of needlework, embroidery and drawing appplied to both areas. Further, they were taught the 'duties of the mother in the family' whilst male students were taught the 'duties and rights of the citizen'. The discrimination in what was taught to women students in their Teacher Colleges reflected the concerns of many educators and politicians that women's subjects should be in accordance with the traditional role models of that time. Therefore, although the State granted women teachers the possibility of teaching both boys and girls, they might have experienced difficulties since they had not any previous training

and education in boys' subjects (such as agriculture). Moreover, this conflicted with existing ideologies of women's lower levels of cognitive ability than their male peers.

In fact, the *1878 Education Reform Act* was not able to offer a solution for the ideological tensions with regard to gender divisions. Despite women's incorporation into teaching, their education as professionals was constrained by traditional gender roles. As mothers or, at least, as those who should act in a motherly way, they were not perceived as citizens. It was the language of dutiful mothers that framed their activities. Men teachers were citizens with duties and rights (and clearly they were not defined as dutiful fathers!).

In many ways, Theobald's characterisation of the situation of Australian women teachers in terms of the contradictions in which they were located, can be usefully applied to the situation of Portuguese women teachers in this period:

> "(...) the infant liberal democratic state was a prisoner of its own assumptions of neutrality and universality. Thus, female teachers were constituted as its agents in the public sphere as 'equally able to be present' at the making of history. At the same time, this constituted an abrupt denial of the specificity of female bodies, of their confinement within domestic space and within the mystique of motherhood" (Theobald 1990:21).

At this point, it may be said, in summary, that the State's contribution to the 'feminisation' of primary teaching was reconceptualised on a conflictual terrain. The 'core problems' theory with regard to the capitalist State to explaining the 'feminisation' of teaching in Portugal emphasises the tensions between the various problems confronting the State. The growing entry of women into teaching can be seen as related to the problem of accumulation when the State expanded mass schooling as they

were expected to be more compliant accepting low salaries. However, employing women as teachers gave rise to problems of legitimation since women were not considered as *citizens*, they had neither the right to vote nor other basic rights. Furthermore, there were sectors of the population who perceived women as inadequate as teachers, lacking the work qualities intrinsic to *true* (male) workers and employees.

But at the same time the Portuguese State, like other States, was under greater pressure to provide mass schooling. These pressures could also provide a favourable terrain for the acceptance of a feminine workforce. Within a context of patriarchal relations, the dissemination of views such as *maternalism* (David 1980) could be seen as partly filling out this terrain, legitimating women's entry in great numbers into teaching as well as presenting teaching as *women's work* whilst, at the same time, through images of the family and of teachers as mothers, an attempt was possibly made to frame, in a regulated form, the working classes and their children within the Nation-State.

The emergence of a 'new orthodoxy' on women's work (1870-1910)

The emergence of a 'new orthodoxy' on women's work, as I have called it, is a further demonstration of the tensions between several perspectives and, at the same time, the outcome of such tensions. The 'new orthodoxy' confirms changing patriarchal relations in the last quarter of the nineteenth-century. Such changes 'allowed' single women (non-married or widows) and women married to 'weak' or 'flawed' husbands to enter the

'workplace'. The debate on 'women's nature' and 'women's education' was fervent among politicians, State officials, educators, doctors and journalists, etc. Many supported 'positivists' views on women and some - the 'egalitarians' - defended equality of opportunities both with respect to the 'citizenplace' and the 'workplace' for women. As the emergence of this 'new orthodoxy' reveals, equality of opportunities was not achieved. As stressed above, only specific categories of women were legitimated as workers in the 'non-manual' world of work. Moreover, their entry to the 'workplace' was settled in rather an instrumental framework: they were perceived through their centrality to the 'regeneration of family life'. As a result, their entry to the 'workplace' was legitimated - at least in the case of women teachers - in terms of a maternal imagery. Although the debate defined women as inferior from the intellectual point of view, they were deemed as adequate and even the best caretakers of children in the 'public' space of mass schooling.

Following studies on women's entry into teaching (such as Danylewicz and Prentice 1984a; 1984b), this research has also underlined that a sexual division of labour in the 'householdplace', where women were in charge of educating children, probably inspired State intervention in producing the policies mentioned above. Using Portuguese novels written at the turn of the nineteenth-century, the research has documented the existence of women governesses as educators and the conditions in which they pursued salaried activities in middle and upper-middle class homes. The fact that the English, German and French governesses were often represented as a symbol of greater status for these families may be related to the semiperipheral situation of

Portuguese society and the admiration that a more 'rational' and 'healthy' education for girls awoke in these social groups.

State attempts to redress the balance between the sexes but primary teaching already is seen as women's work (1910-1926)

With regard to the period, 1910-1926, the thesis was able to demonstrate that the construction of primary teaching as *women's work* during this period operated differently. *Maternalism,* during this period, does not seem to inspire and frame education policies with regard to mass schooling and the 'feminisation' of teaching, with the same vehemence, as in the former period.

During this period - described as "unstable democracy" by Kathleen Schwartzman (1989). due to the instability both at the level of the State (several polls, a high turnover of cabinets, the deterioration of the judicial system and military uprisings) and at the level of political representation (proliferation of political parties and the emergence of parallel power networks) - there occurred a visible attempt to restrict the proportion of women teachers in primary schools (for instance, legislation that primary school posts should be occupied by both men and women teachers). Hence, in spite of explicit policy references to the need for 'a fair balance of sexes' - and even the production of specific policies - at the primary level, the number of women teachers grew unceasingly, while mass schooling developed in an uneven way.

Furthermore, at the level of education policies, while there were explicit statements that nurseries were the places *par excellence* of women's teaching activity (which could be interpreted as attempts to channel women into this level of formal

education), primary teaching was represented with male images. Moreover, both women and men could be in charge of the first three grades of the compulsory school, whilst only men could teach the last two. Therefore, it could be said that the State attempted to secure a male presence in schools, monopolising the more prestigious places for men.

At the same time, these measures can be interpreted as attempts to redress the imbalance between the two sexes at the level of teaching, albeit with little sucess. The 'feminisation' of teaching had already gained some autonomy from the State's explicit activity. Teaching in a primary school was already, in this period, seen as *women's work*, at least, by the women who valued an autonomous life or had to make a living for themselves and their dependents.

The 'Estado Novo' was not the great promoter of 'feminisation'

In 1926, women made up two thirds of the profession. When the 'Estado Novo' launched its main institutions in 1933, women constituted 70% of primary teachers.

During the period 1926-33, a period as unstable as the Republican period at least until 1930 - when some of the trends that later were to characterise the educational policies of the authoritarian 'Estado Novo' became visible - the uneven development of mass schooling contrasted with the steady process of 'feminisation' in primary teaching similar to the former period 1910-1926. The State changed its policies with regard to mass schooling from the 28th May 1926 onwards, although with fluctuations. Compulsory schooling was reduced to three years

while, at the same time, co-education was ended. From then onwards, both male and female pupils and teachers should be separated in different kinds of schools. Men teachers should be in charge of boys' schools, and women, of girls' schools and, of course, mixed schools were to end. Nóvoa has described this process as a logic of "compartmentalisation" (Nóvoa 1992a). But this logic conflicted with another logic behind the policies of the Military Dictatorship: "pragmatic realism" (Nóvoa 1992a, see below). Probably as a result of these contradictory pressures, "pragmatic realism" appears to have played a stronger role and many exceptions were admitted against the official rhetoric of the separation of the sexes.

The research carried out here has demonstrated that mixed schools continued to increase in numbers with women as teachers and directors in schools. Also women were allowed to teach in boys' schools. Therefore, the separation of the sexes in educational policy-making was mainly rhetorical, promoted as a way of gaining legitimation from specific Portuguese social groups. Women teachers steadliy continued to enter teaching at the primary level contradicting the emphasis on the separation of the sexes and the idea that women should be restricted to teaching girls only. Meanwhile, the State did not give support, at least as explicitly as in the monarchist years, to the view that women were the best educators in the public space of the primary school.

On the contrary, pressure to reframe family life and the position of women in more traditional ways, which was increasingly heard during the period 1926-1933, influenced State activity in the sense that women were to be channeled into household duties and therefore, were not to occupy posts in the

'workplace'. Nevertheless, these pressures were not able to stop women from becoming teachers in the primary school. In the late 1920s, they were even able to become inspectors although restricted to girls' schools.

To sum up, the image of primary teaching as *women's work* created during the republican period was maintained after the fall of the Republic. Women, who valued an autonomous life or who had to make a living, entered teaching in increasing numbers. Hence, when some of the main institutions of the 'Estado Novo' were in place, primary teaching had a large majority of two-thirds women. This is an important point that this thesis has been able to establish against conflicting perspectives in the Social Sciences in Portugal which, misleadingly, associate the conservative policies of the 'Estado Novo' with attracting women into primary teaching on a large scale. Advocates of this perspective assume that women's massive entry into teaching was functional to the conservative ideological aims of the authoritarian State due to 'women's passivity' and 'political conservatism'. However, this thesis demonstrates that primary teaching, perceived as women's work, gained some autonomy from State policies well before the 'Estado Novo' started to change educational policies in Portugal.

The uneven development of mass schooling in Portugal (1870-1933)

This thesis has examined the way mass schooling developed in Portugal and its implications for women's increasing entry into primary teaching. The State's involvement in providing mass schooling was deeply contradictory during the whole period which this thesis examines. As a result, mass schooling developed

in an uneven way and the thesis documents the uneveness of this process.

It has been emphasised here that the Portuguese State was well advanced in contrast to most 'core' countries, declaring its intention to provide mass schooling for all in 1835 and 1836. However, this 'precocity' was not supported by sufficient facilities and resources to concretise it. Thus, Soysal and Strang (1989) have called the process of construction of mass schooling in Southern Europe as a "rhetorical construction of education".

The analysis by Sousa Santos (1990a) of the 'heterogeneity' of the semiperipheral Portuguese State explains, in part, this discontinuity between State laws enforcing mass schooling and the delay in the implementation of coherent policies for its expansion. By 'heterogeneity', Santos means that the structural places - the 'workplace', the 'householdplace', the 'citizenplace' - have been less articulated among themselves in Portugal than in 'core countries', or, in other words, they have maintained relationships of "weak complementarity" which has contributed to block State activity. The uneven development of mass schooling may be explained in this light.

With regard to this uneven development of mass schooling in Portugal the thesis has also underlined that this had implications for the late development of the 'feminisation' of teaching, in comparison with 'core' countries, such as France, the United States and England. It was only when the Portuguese State came under relatively stronger pressures to expand mass schooling and, when the number of primary schools increased more rapidly (although considerably distant from what other countries had

achieved on this matter) that policies were produced to attract women into primary schooling.

During the Republic, between 1910 and 1926, mass schooling continued to develop in an uneven way, although State policies in education stressed a concern for the importance of 'instruction' for the "modernisation" of Portugal, even for the most remote villages. Some State initiatives were in fact innovative, such as the creation of the 'higher primary' schools. However, there is evidence that there was a lack of support from the State to provide schools with adequate conditions for children's attendance, and to pay teachers according to the "high mission" attributed to them by official rhetoric. In 1919, the number of years of compulsory schooling was increased but the analysis has demonstrated that the central concern in the last phase of the Republic was for a closer relationship between education and the economy which materialised through the expansion of technical schools. Mass schooling did not receive the attention, in terms of effort and financing, that one might have expected given the emphasis on the role of formal education for the development of Portuguese society.

The State changed its policies with regard to mass schooling from the 28th May 1926 onwards, although with fluctuations. The overall purpose of formal education aimed to "moralise" Portuguese society, which meant establishing closer forms of social control and ending the expectations of social mobility that had been inspired by the Republic. Compulsory schooling was reduced to three years. The policies of the Military Dictatorship were also guided by "pragmatic realism" (Nóvoa 1992a) which appears to have played the strongest role. Mass

schooling should be pursued using a "minimalist logic" of curtailing the number of compulsory years and containing costs, whilst allowing, at the same time, the expansion of pupils' enrolments.

Debates on women's situation structured women teachers' lives (1910-1933)

The thesis has stressed the importance of the debates on women's 'role' and situation in Portuguese society for understanding how they structured women's lives, in particular in the period 1910-1933. Several perspectives of political groups conceived women's position as instrumental to a patriarchal society. At the same time, women organised themselves in both feminist groups and in others to make their voices heard in order to proclaim their rights.

Indeed, the research argues that from the sometimes heated debates on such matters, a broad consensus was achieved by (at least fractions of) republican, anarchist and catholic groups on wifehood, domestic duties and motherhood as the natural progression of women's lives. Feminist groups had a complex relation to these definitions. They struggled for women's right to education, work and the vote. Some changes that the Republic introduced were certainly the result of their influence on the policy-making process, such as, for example, the law on divorce on equal terms and the extension of educational provision from which girls profited (as the life histories of primary teachers testify). However, at the same time, 'women's duties' within the 'householdplace' were not challenged. Indeed, 'first wave' feminism did not bring out into the open these questions, as Walby (1990) underlines with regard to the English case.

Among the left/leftist political groups, such as the republicans and the anarchists, sexual politics was defined in complex and conflictual terms. The right to a formal education was unanimously supported. But views on the right to work and vote were more contentious. Anarchists attached less significance to the vote maintaining that social change was only achieved through the reversal of economic conditions and not via the extension of political rights. Republicans clearly believed in enfranchisement and in the centrality of the political arena where important victories were to be won. They supported women's right to vote before the onset of the Republic. But after the 5th October 1910 they changed their position, expressing their fears of women colluding with the Catholic Church and the conservative forces to defeat the Republic through the vote.

With regard to women's right to work, republicans, in the way they emphasised women's duties in the home, did not leave much space for women's work outside the 'householdplace'. Undoubtedly, feminist sectors, both within and outside the republican parties, supported women's right to work. In fact, the republican State admitted, among other measures, women as civil servants and granted maternity leave of two months to working women, regardless of whether they were married or not. However, the main emphasis of political and educational discourses on the domestic duties of women prevailed.

Anarchists supported women's right to work outside the domestic sphere, but some quite well-known militants stressed in their writings, that women who married should concentrate their energies entirely on their homes. They complained about 'domestic unrest' caused by 'their' women working outside the

'householdplace'. Hence, it is quite clear that their views - although quite radical in Portugal, on various matters, at the time - maintained, with regard to women's situation and rights, a much more complex and contradictory relationship. This shows that gender politics is an area cutting across the boundaries of political parties in ways that are most of the time unexpected. In other words, political parties may often express male interests and views, sometimes in complex and elaborate versions, at others, more obviously.

The Catholics gained in importance towards the end of the republican years. Their views on women's situation and rights were very much framed by the production of the Papal encyclicae which opposed women's rights. Women's work outside the home was linked to the neglect of the needs of the family. Catholic writers in Portugal stressed, despite some initial prospect of compromise with more open views, that it was necessary to prevent women from competing with men in the 'workplace'. Instead the family needed to be 'moralised' through women's involvement in domestic duties. The emphasis on 'women's best place is in the home' was voiced more loudly and, after the fall of the Republic, informed the regulations of the authoritarian State.

These debates on women's situation among the various political groups had a special resonance for women teachers. They contributed to structure women teachers' lives in conformity with strict rules of moral behaviour. As women teachers, their professional role was conditioned by images of their role in the family as mothers, wives and housekeepers. At the same time, emerging discourses on women's rights encouraging more open opportunities in the 'workplace' and the 'citizenplace' made their

situation more contradictory than the basic consensus on women's domestic duties would lead us to think.

Stormy tensions for women primary teachers around co-education (1910-1933)

A further and important contribution of this thesis is the disclosure of the debates around co-education and single sex schools which illuminate the conflictual way in which gender relations were perceived. At the same time, the thesis has also revealed how women teachers, due to the way policies were organised according to their gender, reacted with regard to co-education, in their active understanding of their rights as human beings and professionals.

When in 1927, the government of the Military Dictatorship ended the eight year experience of co-education in primary schools, the battle between those in favour and those against was quite vivid. From the governmental perspective, it is fairly clear that its ending attempted to reinforce more traditional ways of life for women. Those who were against co-education argued in terms of the danger of sexual promiscuity and of girls losing their 'natural' attributes as future housekeepers, seeing co-education and its consequences as an influence of 'bolshevism'. Those who were in favour, besides seeing in it more equal opportunities for girls, supported it in terms of the 'naturalness' of the process, of bringing to the same school spaces and processes for those who would construct their futures together as heterosexual beings.

The debates on co-education or single-sex schools also had implications for women teachers and their activities in schools. They reveal the 'stormy' tensions surrounding their

teaching, even in remote villages. From 1926-1927 onwards, it seems clear that women teachers were more than ever confronted with traditional views on their 'female nature': the whole emphasis by increasingly dominant conservative forces on the need for girls to learn needlework reinforces the idea that there was not much space left for women in addition to their lives as wives, mothers and housekeepers. The expression of fears of 'sexual promiscuity' was certainly a way of putting pressure on adult women to be careful in their attitudes and relationships with the opposite sex. Young women teachers, more than the older ones, would probably have felt these pressures.

Women teachers reacted, contrary to assumptions of women's passivity and political conservatism

This research has also revealed the views of women teachers on professional matters. Through a reading of the educational press, one may gather that, although they were accused of being against co-education by some male educators, some favoured co-education whilst others refused it on similar grounds to other educators who took part in the debate. But women teachers spoke about specific topics which clearly discriminated against them and threatened their notion of equality with their male peers, after co-education was introduced in 1919.

Firstly, they protested against discriminatory State policies regarding women teachers that restricted them to teaching children of the first three grades of the primary school and putting men in charge of the last two grades (as well as allowing men teachers to teach in the first three grades). They understood that such policies were guided by assumptions that

women were politically conservative and the scandal was that men teachers were never perceived in this way. Secondly, they also protested because they feared that the amalgamation of boys' and girls' schools would curtail their prospects of becoming headmistresses. In both cases, State policies were perceived as supporting a male preserve and acting in their interests. Indeed, patriarchal relations were changing within the primary school (for instance, through the attempt to grant girls equal access), but male positions of power and prestige were largely preserved.

After the military coup of the 28th May 1926, women teachers still used their voices to claim their rights to become inspectors and occupy any position within schools. They also demonstrated with great vigour their support of the right for married women teachers to work, against pressures to leave teaching upon marriage, during the 1930s. This struggle occurred both at national and international levels. To counteract such a tendency, they stressed the need to secure and extend maternity leave, which the conservative sectors wanted to abolish, or at least restrict to married women. In fact, the government managed to restrict it some time later.

Contrary to assumptions of women's passivity and political conservatism, this thesis reveals that women teachers were active in support of their rights and, despite living in harsh conditions and at a time when their access to public discourse was conditioned by the context of patriarchal relations, they were able to fight these conditions with the (limited) means they found at their disposal.

Listening to the voices of women teachers: work as women's autonomy

My analysis of the educational press has demonstrated that women teachers were not the passive beings often assumed in previous studies. The life histories collected from five women teachers who started their lives in the final period of the Republic or in the Military Dictatorship offer also important testimony of their activities as women and professionals. In fact, through them we gain a sense of the variability and diversity of their lives, perceiving that the active construction of their actions relates to that diversity and variability.

Their life histories reveal that many of their activities were 'private' in the sense that women teachers were involved in 'domestic duties' both in the school and in their homes. Indeed, women teachers had two 'workplaces', both defined by the expectations of their traditional role in society. In the 'householdplace', they were in charge of the activities and duties - sometimes with the help of housemaids - which traditionally were attributed to women. In the school they were in some ways expected to resume the relationships they had with children in the home. Their duties with regard to their own children often extended into school, keeping them in the classroom while babies or becoming their own teachers. Thus, there were strong continuities between both 'workplaces'.

In fact, they were conditioned by wider social relations concerning gender and class. They tended to concentrate their professional activity in the classroom and to distance themselves from involvement with the surrounding community. The social construction of their gender did not facilitate a wider

participation in a peasant community. Further, the identification of teachers with 'mental' rather than 'manual work', i.e. with social relations in terms of class, stressed by Prentice and Theobald (1991), may be relevant to these teachers. Women teachers, due to these constructions, "were torn between the image of true womanhood and their position as paid members of the labour force" (1991:13). Although, in general, they were genuinely curious about the traditions and habits of peasants and mountaineers - they were like ethnographers - the constraints mentioned did not accomodate a more open articulation with peasant culture. Indeed, for these women teachers the school represented the one true culture to be brought to 'uncivilized' people.

Their life histories also reveal, through the 'kaleidoscope' effect (Stanley 1992), that the lives of these women teachers were more creative and engaged in the real lives of the communities in which they worked than Social Sciences have usually admitted.

But work and living conditions were harsh and solitary in many respects. From an economic point of view, they were poorly paid and, with the establishment of the 'Estado Novo', they were increasingly aware that the State was not going to value their professional work in better terms. From a political point of view, conditions were also harsh since the policies and discourses of the State and its agents were increasingly intolerant. To survive in such a system and maintain one's own moral integrity, at least for some of them, was not easy. From the point of view of their gender specificity, they had a clear notion that their behaviour was scrutinised by the communities and they had to protect their

'respectability' through various strategies, such as keeping their children with them as 'bodyguards'.

Although conditions were in fact difficult, these women teachers searched for personal fulfillment through their professional lives. For some of them, it meant being able to find specific solutions, in constraining and threatening situations, while able to keep their own moral/political integrity. It meant also the avoidance of specific school practices, such as Catholic prayers or the teaching of the colonial propaganda of the Portuguese State, considered by them as contrary to what they believed.

Their support for the process of mass schooling of children from peasant communities and for the relevance of formal education is also very salient in their lives. Many school practices and routines involved a level of engagement that is hard to understand nowadays, considering the difficult conditions in which they lived and worked. Also some were able also to construct their adult lives as the strongest members of their families in terms of the responsibilities and decisions that had to be taken, and others in terms of income and survival of the family group.

Formal education and work in the public sphere gave them the possibility of gaining forms of autonomy and some independence from their male partners and possibilities of influencing the communities in which they worked, despite gender conditioning. As pioneers, they were continuing the work of earlier champions of the rights of women to education and to work, for which first wave feminism had visibly struggled. Through their aspirations and struggles, I can conclude that they had were

finding the words to express and frame their "existential dilemma" (Theobald 1990:21).

Questions for Further Research

Having analysed such a long and complex period with regard to women's entry into primary teaching, there are necessarily questions that can be pursued in future sociological research. To focus on teachers' lived experience and not only on state policy is crucial to understand the importance of gender in the construction of teaching.

The first line of research that I think useful to pursue is more detailed research into the resistance by wider sectors of the population to women's entry into primary teaching. I was able to uncover part of it but I think that an exploration of other kinds of sources, for instance local and national newspapers, could be an interesting way of discovering the local reactions to the increasing number of women teachers in rural places. In that way it will be possible to have more of a sense of how much teaching in the public place was considered by some sectors as an "act of transgression" to use Gemie's words (1991:203) as women were occupying a former male space. The conflictuality around women as teachers in the public space of schooling would become even more visible and we could get a more rigorous picture of the difficult experiences that teaching has represented for women in the context of patriarchal relations.

Secondly, it would be interesting to pursue the line of research regarding primary teaching as women's work during the republican period. This could be expanded in terms of relating the increasing number of women coming into primary teaching with

changes in class and occupational structure. A more systematic knowledge of women's entry into other occupations in this period, such as nursing, pharmacy, medicine, etc., would aid understanding of women's aspirations and perceptions of potential areas of work open to them.

A third line of research which has been addressed in this thesis is the construction of mass schooling. It has been analysed mainly in relation to the issue of women's entry to primary education. However I am aware that a more detailed and complex analysis of mass schooling of both boys and gilrs is needed. This is relevant since the studies published on mass schooling and its emergence generally embrace a universal child, apparently without being able to address the construction of mass schooling as differentiated by gender and race.

The fourth area of research that I want to pursue, I have already begun with this thesis: using life histories of women teachers to explore the relationships between their past and present experiences, as well as the interconnections between the 'private' and 'public' in the construction of their lives. I find life histories a useful resource in my teaching in Sociology of Education and Women's Studies at the University of Oporto. Students are encouraged to compare past with present professional lives and to collect life histories of contemporary women teachers. In this way, the aim is to appreciate the complex lives of women teachers who have been marginalised by historical and sociological analysis.

Finally, the completion of this thesis has involved synthesising complex issues regarding the relationship between 'structure' and 'agency' through the integration of State policies,

ideologies and women teachers' subjectivities. The process of researching the entry of women into State primary schooling has both responded to my initial questions and opened up further areas for future research. The most significant aspect of this research for me has been the possibility of bringing forward the life histories both personal and professional of former women teachers. I can now reflect upon the connections between their past lives and the contemporary contexts and experiences of women teachers. Thus I envisage this research as a contribution towards strenghtening the inter-relationship between Sociology of Education and Women's Studies in Portugal.